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*Fuṣḥā* versus *‘āmmīyah*
(Including an appendix in a separate volume)

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Proefschrift voorgelegd tot het behalen van de graad
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Promotor: Prof. Dr. J. Verschueren

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Samenvatting

In dit proefschrift zal, aan de hand van een grondige analyse van een zeer levendig en soms polemisch debat omtrent het standaardiseren van andere variëteiten dan het klassiek Arabisch (al-‘arabīyah fiṣḥā), getracht worden de kijk van Arabische intellectuelen op variabiliteit in het Arabisch bloot te leggen. Dit debat, doorgaans gekend als het fiṣḥā-‘āmmīyah debat, bestaat uit verscheidene voorstellen van zowel Arabische als Westerse intellectuelen die in het Midden Oosten leefden om één of meerdere niet- fiṣḥā variëteiten van het Arabisch te standaardiseren en te gebruiken als schrijftaal en de reacties hierop.

Het uitgangspunt van deze analyse is dat het debat een taal-ideologisch debat is. Dit impliceert dat mijn analyse vertrekt vanuit het idee dat het debat over meer gaat dan alleen maar taal en dat de sociale, politieke en religieuze overtuigingen en beweegredenen van de participanten missens even belangrijk zijn als hun linguistische ideeën. Vermits deze beweegredenen vaak impliciet gelaten worden, moesten ze via analyse blootgelegd worden.

Deze analyse bestaat enerzijds uit een grondige en diepgaande tekstanalyse van een relatief kort sub-debat dat uit het ruimere debat gelicht werd. Deze analyse werd vervolgens als basis gebruikt voor een analyse van het ruimere fiṣḥā-‘āmmīyah debat.

Het sub-debat werd gevoerd in de periode tussen november 1881 en juli 1882 in het wetenschappelijk en cultureel tijdschrift Al-Muqtaṭaf, dat op dat moment uitgegeven werd in Beiroet. Het debat werd geopend met een artikel van de uitgevers van het tijdschrift, namelijk Ya‘qūb Śarrāf en Fāris Nīmr, waarin gesteld werd dat de kloof tussen de geschreven en de gesproken taal een belangrijke hinderpaal vormde voor algemene vooruitgang in de Arabische wereld. Na een korte bespreking van drie mogelijke oplossingen, namelijk de vervanging van het Arabisch door een westers taal, de vervanging van de schrijftaal door de spreektaal of de vervanging van de spreektaal door de schrijftaal, nodigden zij de intellectuelen uit hun meningen over deze kwestie te uiten. In de loop van de daarop volgende maanden verschenen er in totaal tien artikels over dit onderwerp. Deze artikels waren niet alleen reacties op het eerste artikel, maar ook op eventueel voorafgaande reacties.

De analyse van dit sub-debat bestaat enerzijds uit een grondige interne analyse waarin aandacht besteed werd aan o.a. expliciete en impliciete argumentatiepatronen, lexical preferenties en het gebruik van persoonsdeixis. Anderzijds wordt aandacht besteed aan de ruimere historische context waarin het debat gevoerd. Dit houdt in dat de algemene context van historische
ontwikkelingen die voorafgaan aan en samenvallen met het sub-debat besproken worden. Op het moment dat het debat gevoerd werd, maakte het Midden Oosten deel uit van het Ottomaanse Rijk. Tijdens de 19de eeuw vonden belangrijke ontwikkelingen plaats die breed samengevat kunnen worden als modernisering en verwestering, m.n. op het niveau van onderwijs, vertaling en journalistiek, en het begin van de politieke versplintering van het Ottomaanse rijk.

Verder wordt ook de concrete context waarin het sub-debat gevoerd werd belicht, m.n. door het tijdschrift dat het medium voor het debat was en door de biografische achtergrond van de participanten te schetsen. Met het verschaﬀen van deze informatie wordt meer beoogd dan louter het geven van interessante achtergrondinformatie. Het is de bedoeling duidelijk aan te geven dat het debat niet in een intellectueel vacuum gevoerd werd, maar door bestaande (m.a.w. historische) personen met een levensgeschiedenis en met een religieuze, politieke, sociale en intellectuele achtergrond. Het zal worden aangetoond dat de biografische informatie wel degelijk belangrijk is voor een beter begrip van het debat en de argumenten die worden aangevoerd.

Bovendien wordt door de beschrijving van de concrete context van het sub-debat ook duidelijk aangegeven dat het debat een historische gebeurtenis is. Hierdoor, en door het sub-debat te beschouwen als een onderdeel van het ruimere *fusha-*‘āmmiyah debat, kon de grondige tekstanalyse van het sub-debat gebruikt worden als een springplaats voor een analyse van het verdere verloop van het debat tot ongeveer 1960. In deze analyse wordt dieper ingegaan op een reeks latere voorstellen om *fusha* als schrijftaal te vervangen door ‘āmmiyah en de reacties op deze voorstellen.

De analyse van het verdere verloop van het debat is breder van aanpak dan de grondige tekstanalyse van het eerste sub-debat, maar is toch diepgaand genoeg om een aantal vergelijkingen te maken tussen de verschillende sub-debatten. Zo blijkt o.a. dat niet alle voorstellen om *fusha* als schrijftaal te vervangen door ‘āmmiyah dezelfde inhoud en implicaties hebben. Er onderscheid moet gemaakt worden tussen de voorstellen om de spreektaal te gebruiken als basis voor één nieuwe standaardtaal voor alle sprekers van het Arabisch en de voorstellen om een regionale variëteit te standaardiseren en te gebruiken als schrijftaal binnen een bepaalde regio.

Vooral in Egypte, en dan met name tijdens de jaren ‘20 en ‘30 van deze eeuw, stelden verscheidene Egyptische intellectuelen het gebruik van Egyptisch Arabisch als schrijftaal voor. Deze voorstellen moeten gezien worden in het kader van een bredere tendens van Egyptisch nationalism (dat uitgesproken anti-Arabisch was), waarvan het creëren van een specifiek nationale Egyptische literatuur een onderdeel was.
Ten slotte, wil ik verwijzen naar het feit dat een analyse van het *fushā-'āmmīyah* debat ons ook een dieper inzicht kan verschaffen in de huidige Arabische taalsituatie, en met name in de linguïstische normen die momenteel gangbaar zijn in de Arabische taalgemeenschap. Doorgaans wordt het begrip 'diglossie' gebruikt in verwijzingen naar het Arabisch, waar mee meestal gedaald wordt op de verschillende normen die voor geschreven en officieel taalgebruik, enerzijds, en voor gesproken en informeel taalgebruik, anderzijds, gehanteerd worden. Doordat in de analyse van het debat de onderliggende ideologische patronen van de keuze van de nationale standaardtaal, namelijk *fushā*, blootgelegd worden, kunnen we een duidelijker kijk krijgen op hoe deze normen tot stand zijn gekomen.
Acknowledgements

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Last but not least, I want to thank my family for always being there, and in particular my mother, moeke, who has always been a mother in the most complete sense of the word.
Note on transliteration

For the consonants used in *fuḥā*, the following transliteration symbols are:

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Original texts in Arabic
Introduction

This dissertation aims at providing a detailed description of the public debate on linguistic variability in the Arab world, more in particular with respect to written language use. The norms for written language use had remained basically unchanged since their codification was completed around the tenth century AD. Although there have always been Arabic written texts that deviated from these norms, they only started to be seriously questioned in the nineteenth century, in the form of a highly polemical and heated debate that continued roughly until the sixties of the twentieth century. This debate is generally known as the *fuṣḥā-‘āmmīyah* debate.

The debate was triggered by several proposals to replace *al-‘arabīyah al-fuṣḥā*, which literally means ‘the most eloquent Arabic’, with *al-lugah al-‘āmmīyah*, ‘the folk language.’ The sensitivity of the issue in the Arab world is illustrated by the fact that thousands of pages have been written on this subject, mostly in Arabic, but also in European languages.

Before presenting the overall structure of the dissertation, I want to emphasize that one of the main points of departure of this research is that the *fuṣḥā-‘āmmīyah* debate is a ‘language ideological debate’ (Blommaert, 1999). This means that one of my basic analytical starting points is that in the debate there is much more at stake than language alone and that the social, political and religious considerations of the participants are as important as the linguistic ones. These ‘extra-linguistic’ considerations are sometimes explicit, but are often left implicit which means that they had to be uncovered through analysis.

I chose to focus on a sub-debate of the *fuṣḥā-‘āmmīyah* debate which was conducted between 1881 and 1882 in *Al-Muqtaṭaf* (which literally means ‘Selection’), a famous Arabic periodical which was published in Beirut. This sub-debate consists of eleven articles that were submitted by seven participants, namely Ya‘qūb Sarrūf, Fāris Nimr, Ḥāliṯ Al-Yāẓīǧī, The Damascene Literary Society, ‘As’ad Dāǧir and Mitrī Qandalaft, and two anonymous authors, Al-Mumkin (a pseudonym which literally means the ‘The Possible’) and H.H.

The sub-debate was opened with a short article written by Sarrūf and Nimr, the editors of *Al-Muqtaṭaf*, in which they observed that the Arab world was not as successful from an economic, technological and scientific point of view as the West and that one of the main causes for this was the gap between the spoken and the written language in Arabic. Subsequently, they discussed three possible solutions, namely the replacement of Arabic with a foreign language, the replacement of the written language with the spoken language, or the replacement of the spoken language with the written language. They concluded their article with an invitation directed to ‘all the distinguished writers who vie for the welfare of the
Introduction

fatherland’ (Sarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 354) to investigate this matter and to express their opinions on it. A short but vivid debate was opened.

During the following months (between November 1881 and July 1881) ten reactions were published. The participants reacted not only to the first article, which initiated the debate, but also to the other reactions that were published prior to their own. This means that all debaters were at all times aware that they were really participating in a debate. This is further sustained by the fact that all the articles but the two first ones were published in the debate section of the journal, and that the debate was explicitly opened and closed by the editors of Al-Muqtataf.

There are several reasons for opting for a profound analysis of a relatively small sub-debate, rather than for a longitudinal study of the entire debate. First of all, the amount of materials on the subject is overwhelming. An exhaustive study of the fushā-'āmmīyah debate in the framework of one book-size research report is simply impossible. Secondly, some more general studies of the debate, such as Sa'īd (1964), Diem (1974) and Gully (1995), have already been written. Thirdly, by focusing on this sequence of eleven articles, a much more detailed analysis was possible.

However, this should not lead one to conclude that the sub-debate is the ‘data corpus’ of this thesis. As I hope to demonstrate, the conclusions based on a close reading and detailed analysis of these eleven articles can be used as a basis for a deeper understanding of the wider fushā-'āmmīyah debate. In this sense, my ‘data corpus’ is much larger. Nevertheless, since the analysis is based directly on this sub-debate, I brought the eleven articles in their original Arabic form together with an integral translation into English in an appendix. This will enable the reader to look at the sequence of eleven articles as a whole. It will also give him or her the opportunity to put the quotes that are given in the course of the analysis in the direct context of the relevant article and of the sub-debate. In order to facilitate finding the quotes in the original texts and the translation, I numerated the paragraphs in them. These numbers are indicated between square brackets, after the reference to the page numbers.

The dissertation is divided into three parts. The chapters of Part I (Chapters 1 and 2) deal with the general context in which the debate was conducted, as well as its influence on the ways in which linguistic variability in the Arab world is generally perceived. In Part II (Chapters 4 to 6) the analysis of the sub-debate is presented. In Part III (Chapters 7 and 8) attempts at ‘placing’ the sub-debate ‘back’ into the larger fushā-'āmmīyah debate, which also includes repositioning and re-contextualizing the periodical Al-Muqtataf and the selected sub-debate into its wider context. The analyzes made in Part II of the ingredients of the sub-debate now allow us to better grasp their role and significance from an overall perspective.

The scope and the importance of the fushā-'āmmīyah debate can only be fully appreciated with some background information about linguistic variability in
Introduction

contemporary Arabic and the ways in which it is evaluated by its speakers. In Chapter 1, after a short introduction about the official and religious status of Arabic and the most important varieties of Arabic, I will mainly focus on the different statuses of these varieties in the Arab world. I will also discuss how there is a different set of norms for written and official language use, on the one hand, and for spoken daily conversations, on the other. Even though Arab scholars have been aware of this difference from at least as early as the fourteenth century, as exemplified in the writings of Ibn Ḥaldūn, it was only seriously questioned in the nineteenth century.

Since I strongly believe that the opening of the fuṣḥā-‘āmmiyah debate in the nineteenth century was not accidental, I discuss the broad historical developments that took place during that period in Chapter 2. I will focus on the broad developments of modernization, Westernization and the beginnings of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, as well as some more specific developments in the domains of education, translation, printing and journalism. Needless to say, all these developments were strongly interrelated. Throughout the discussion, I will briefly indicate their influence on the debate.

The first two chapters (Part I) can be read as the general frame in which the actual analysis of the sub-debate, which is presented in the four following chapters (Part II), can be placed. In Chapter 3, I provide an analysis of the ways in which cultural and social categories are dealt with in the sub-debate. In the first section of that chapter, I will discuss representations of the West in the debate. We will see how the debaters strategically compare and contrast developments of the Arabic language with those of European languages and how they question the desirability of following the example of the West. This is followed by an analysis of the ways in which the participants deal with social differences. Social differences were mainly described in terms of a social cleavage between the elite (al-ḥāsaaḥ) and the common people (al-‘āmmah). However, these social categories are never clearly defined in the debate. Even if one of the motives for opening the debate was the observation that the common people are not able to read and understand (science) books, it is clear that the social cleavage itself was not seriously questioned. We will see that, in the eyes of the debaters, the aim of the general spread of literacy and scientific knowledge is not so much the improvement of the living conditions of the ‘āmmah, but rather the general progress of the Arab community or nation (‘ummah) as a whole.

Chapter 4 deals with how the debaters perceive linguistic differences in Arabic and how these differences are stressed and downplayed in order to sustain certain positions in the debate. A lot of attention is paid to the linguistic labels that are used in order to refer to Arabic varieties. A close analysis of linguistic terminology and the ways in which it is used in the debate provides us with further insight into the attitudes of the debaters toward the linguistic varieties which they describe by means of these terms. The analysis of the linguistic attitudes of the
debaters is further supported by an account of their explicit descriptions of the linguistic varieties concerned. Another reason for the closer investigation of linguistic labels is that, due to the developments in the domains of education, translation and the printed media during the nineteenth century, Arabic itself underwent some important changes. These changes were mainly a matter of the lexicon. Not only were many new words coined and borrowed from other languages in order to meet the need for lexical expansion in Arabic, a lot of existing words were re-semantized. We can say that nineteenth-century language use is characterized by the transition from medieval-classical language use to modern language use. A close analysis of terminology enables us to avoid the pitfall of reading meanings into lexical items which they did not have at the time of their occurrence and of imposing a single interpretation where meaning is ambiguous. It also sheds light on the general linguistic developments that were taking place during the nineteenth century.

In Chapter 5, extra-linguistic issues that are at stake in the debate will be discussed. I will discuss how the Arabic language becomes an important element in the construction of an Arab identity for the debaters. Despite the differences of opinion, all debaters are convinced of the importance of having one common language for all Arabs. This means that the only defender of standardizing the folk language also has one common standard for all the Arabs in mind. This is an important observation since in discussions of the fushā-‘āmmiyah debate, the relation between defending the folk language and regional forms of nationalism is often taken for granted. We will see, on the other hand, that the debaters assess the importance of the Arabic literary heritage for Arab identity differently. While the defenders of al-faṣāḥah emphasize its importance, the defender of al-‘āmmiyah tries to downplay it. In this chapter, I will also pay attention to the fact that the majority of the debaters, (namely Ṣarrāf, Ṣimr, Al-Yāzőḡ, Dāḡir and Qandalaft) were Christians, while there is no information about the anonymous participants, Al-Mumkin and H. H. and the members of the Damascene Literary Society. I will try to demonstrate how the religious background of the participants might have influenced certain positions taken in the debate.

In Chapter 6, we will see that the debaters also quote from the Arabic heritage, and more specifically from medieval Arabic historical and linguistic sources. Classical works, which before were only available as manuscripts, had become increasingly available through print. I will discuss how the debaters quote these sources and how they draw on them in order to sustain their positions in the debate. These patterns of citation and reference are crucial in understanding recurrent themes in the debate, such as the invocation of ‘eloquence’ (faṣāḥah-balāḏār), ‘authenticity,’ ‘purity’ and others as argumentative building blocks.

Part III, then, brings the sub-debate back to its proper context. In Chapter 7, a general chronological overview of the sub-debate is given in which the main arguments of the participants are summarized. Also, more biographical details on
the debaters will allow us to interpret the preceding analyzes with more precision. Since debates never develop in an intellectual vacuum, but are always conducted by real people, it is important to know who the debaters were. What was their social and religious background? What kind of education did they receive? What were their general intellectual and political orientations? As will be demonstrated, this information is more than just some interesting or random biographical information about the participants: it is essential to understand the debate as a historical event. Just as the general historical context of the debate was crucial for the actual development of the debate, the participants themselves played a decisive role in it. This may seem trivial at first sight, but I hope to show that an analysis focusing only on texts disregarding their authors, would be unwarranted in this case.

In Chapter 8, the overall fuṣḥā-‘āmmīyah debate is discussed further. First of all, I give a brief introduction to the already existing literature on the subject. Then I discuss the further development of the general debate after the analyzed episode. I zoom in on a few cases, presenting a preliminary analysis of other proposals to change the linguistic norms for written and official language use in the Middle East, instead of giving a more complete overview of the rest of the debate. This choice has the advantage of avoiding the false impression of exhaustiveness and, again, the possibility of dealing with the materials in a more detailed way. It also gives me the opportunity to draw some comparisons between the specific sub-debate (1881-1882) and later manifestations of the debate, thus putting the analysis of the sub-debate in a wider perspective. More in particular, I discuss the following cases: the further development of the debate in Al-Muqtataf in 1887-1888, the Willmore-debate in 1902, the proposals concerning the Egyptianization of Arabic in Egypt in the 1920s, and the linguistic reform proposals of the Lebanese linguist Anis Frayhah in 1938 and 1955.

The debate in Al-Muqtataf in 1887-1888 was conducted between Šādīd Yaḥīt and Asʿād Daḡīr. The Willmore-debate was triggered by proposals to standardize Cairene Arabic as a written standard language in Egypt, made by a British judge in Egypt, Seldom Willmore, in 1902. I concentrate on the proposal itself, as well as five reactions to it that appeared in three different journals. Since both Christians and Muslims reacted to the proposal, it was possible to compare patterns in their argumentation, as well as their lexical preferences. The debate concerning the Egyptianization of Arabic in Egypt during the 1920s must be related to the development of a specific form of Egyptian nationalism that was anti-Arab. In both the Willmore debate and the Egyptianization debate the central issue is standardization of Egyptian Arabic for use in Egypt, while in the analyzed sub-debate (1881-1882) the standardization of one spoken form of Arabic for all Arabs was proposed. The standardization of spoken Arabic as used by intellectuals is also the basis of Anis Frayhah’s proposals in 1938 and 1955.
Chapter 8 is concluded with some brief references to general developments that took place during the last fifty years. During the 1950s and 1960s, when most Arab states gained independence, Arabic became their official and national language. Although it is not explicitly stated as such, they imply *fushā*. The position of *fushā* was further consolidated by the foundation of the Arabic Language Academies and the cultural and educational departments of the Arab League, as well as the official language policies of the Arab states. By means of these initiatives *fushā* was and continues to be developed into a full-fledged standard language.
PART I
Chapter 1: Basic features of variability in Arabic

This chapter is a concise introduction to some basic features of variability in Arabic. I think some familiarity with variability in Arabic and the way it is evaluated by native speakers is necessary in order to appreciate the importance of the fusha-'dmymyah debate.

I will subsequently discuss the official and religious status of Arabic, some features (socio)linguistic variability in Arabic and its evaluation in the Arab world in terms of linguistic prestige and standards. In conclusion, I will briefly evaluate the concept of 'diglossia.'

THE OFFICIAL AND RELIGIOUS STATUS OF ARABIC

The official status of Arabic

Although it is not mentioned explicitly in the Charter of the League of Arab States,1 Arabic is constitutionally at least one of the official languages of all its 21 member states and the Palestinian National Authorities (PNA).2 For most member states it is the only official language. In the Comoros the official languages are Comorian, Arabic and French, in Somalia Arabic and Somali. Iraq recognizes Kurdish as an official language in the Kurdish Autonomous Region. The Mauritanian constitution states that Arabic is the official language and that Arabic, Fulani, Wolof and Soninké are the national languages of the country. The constitutions of the other states, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Yemen only mention Arabic as the official language. Since 1974 Arabic is also one of the official languages of UNESCO.

1 The first article of the Charter of the League of Arab States goes as follows: 'The League of Arab States consists of the independent Arab countries that have signed the Charter. Every independent Arab state has the right to join the League. If it wishes to join, it has to forward a request that will be submitted to the permanent general secretariat. It will be proposed to the council during the first meeting that will be held after the forwarding of the request.' [translation mine] The charter does not specify what it means to be an 'Arab state' (Arab League, 1995: 32).

2 The PLO was admitted to the Arab League in 1976. Article 3 of The Draft Basic Law for the Palestinian National Authority states that 'Arabic shall be the official language of Palestine.' Israel recognizes Hebrew and Arabic as official languages.
However, note that not all states that recognize Arabic officially are member states of the Arab League. For instance, Chad recognizes Arabic as an official language, but is not a member state of the Arab League.

**The religious status of Arabic**

Arabic is also the religious and liturgical language of Islam. The Koran was explicitly revealed in Arabic and a number of Koranic verses refer to this. This has as a consequence that from an orthodox religious point of view, the Koran is principally untranslatable and that Muslims across the world are expected to recite the Koran and say their prayers in Arabic, even if they do not speak or understand it.
WHERE IS ARABIC SPOKEN?

The total number of native speakers is more than 200 million. Most of them live in the countries mentioned above, but Arabic-speaking minorities can be found in Asia in southern Iran, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and southern Turkey; in Africa in the northern parts of Nigeria, Niger, Mali and Chad. In Cyprus an Arabic-based vernacular is still spoken and, although thoroughly influenced by Romance languages, Maltese is structurally a variety of Arabic. Arabic is also acquired as a native language in many immigrant communities in Western Europe and the United States.

Beside Arabic, many 'minority' languages are spoken in different parts of the Arab world, such as different Berber (Tamazight) varieties in the Maghrib, Kurdish in Syria and Iraq, Nubian in the south of Egypt and the north of Sudan, several Bantu languages in the south of Sudan and Aramean in a few villages in Syria.

Despite several arabicization attempts, English and French, and to a lesser extent Italian and Spanish, remain important languages in most Arab countries, mainly in the domains of business and higher education.

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The term 'minority language' does not necessarily refer to the number of speakers of this language, but rather to the position it occupies or the recognition it has in a certain society.
**VARIABILITY IN ARABIC**

**Spoken varieties**

It is not hard to imagine that, with more than 200 million native speakers, spread out over a vast area from the Atlantic to the Gulf, there must be a lot of variability within Arabic. This variability is of a geographical (regional) and a social nature.

Even though further research is needed, the Arab-speaking world is usually divided into five main dialect areas: the Maghribi dialect area (Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya), the Egyptian dialect area (Egypt and the Sudan), the Levantine dialect area (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine), the Mesopotamian dialect area (Iraq) and the Gulf dialect area (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and Yemen). In each of these areas several subgroups of dialects and dialects can be distinguished, that 'may be thought of as being distributed along innumerable sets of intersecting continua, from Morocco in the west to Oman in the East, and from the borders of southern Turkey in the north to Sudan in the south' (Holes 1995:3).

Social varieties of Arabic are those that can be linked with socio-economic groups (e.g. Bedouins-peasants-urbanites in Jordan), religious groups (e.g. non-Muslim-Muslim in Iraq), sectarian groups (e.g. Sunni-Shi’ite in Bahrain), or 'ethnic'/national groups\(^4\) (e.g. Palestinian-Jordanian in Jordan).

Social variability often intersects with geographical variability and vice versa. For instance, although the varieties spoken in Damascus, Aleppo, Beirut and Jerusalem show regional variation, they share some features that characterize them as urban Levantine. Salient phonological characteristics of these varieties are the realization of the uvular plosive /q/ as a glottal stop /ʔ/, realization of the interdentals /l/ and /d/ as stops /l/ and /d/ (sometimes as sibilants /s/ and /z/). On the other hand, Bedouin dialects all over the Arab world, despite regional differences, have some characteristics in common, e.g. the realization of /q/ as /g/. The intersection of social and geographical variation can also be illustrated by the case of Iraq. The Iraqi dialects can be divided into a qeltu- and a gelet-group\(^5\) (Blanc, 1964). The qeltu-dialects are spoken in the north of Iraq (Mosul, Tikrit, Erbil and Kirkuk), while the gelet-dialects are spoken in southern Iraq, including Baghdad. But in the north the qeltu-dialects are only spoken by sedentary groups, while the non-sedentaries speak a gelet-dialect, and within Baghdad, the non-Muslims speak a qeltu-dialect, while the Muslims speak a gelet-dialect.

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\(^5\) The distinction is based on the way speakers form the first person singular of the past tense of the *fusha* -verb *qalla – yaqultu* (to say). (Blanc, 1964)
**Fuṣḥā**

At Arab schools, students learn a very formal variety of Arabic, which is often called Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). This is actually the modernized version of the highly codified and formalized Classical Arabic (CA).

Whether MSA and CA should be considered two different varieties is still heavily debated. Most differences between CA and MSA are situated mainly on the lexical level (new scientific and technical terminology), although structural distinctions can be made too.⁶ Due to developments in the domains of translation, education and printing during the nineteenth century, Arabic underwent some important changes, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2. Nevertheless it remains hard to draw a sharp dividing line between Classical and Modern Arabic. In Hole’s words ‘there is no chronological point at which CLA [CA] turned into MSA, still less any agreed set of linguistic criteria which could differentiate the two’ (Holes 1995: 4). One of the main problems with attempts to distinguish between MSA and CA is then the lack of consistent definitions. The terms mean different things for different authors, and even authors who make the distinction explicitly, tend to blur it by using sometimes the terms with reference to the same variety.⁷

In the Arab world most people consider them as one variety, namely, *al-‘arabīyyah al-fuṣḥā*, which means literally ‘the most eloquent Arabic’ or *al-‘arabīyyah al-faṣḥah*, which means eloquent Arabic. ‘Fuṣḥā’ is actually a superlative of *fuṣḥah.* In Arabic linguistic publications some linguists have made a distinction between *al-‘arabīyyah al-faṣḥah* and *al-‘arabīyyah al-fuṣḥā*, the latter

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⁶ On the morphological level, for instance, the practice of coining of new lexical items out of compounds (*nāhī*), which was in CA restricted to frequently used expressions (such as, *bāndala* (to say *al-bando bī-lilhā*), *hawqalā* (to say *lā hawqal wa lā quwwata illa bī-lilhā*), was expanded. Many compounds were created with the negative particle *lā*, such as *lāmarakazāyyah* ‘decentralism’ (*lā* (no) + *markaziyah* (centralism)), *barnā‘a* ‘bambūsia’ (*bar* (land) + *mā* (water)) etc. (Chejne, 1969: 49-50)

being reserved for the language of the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry. Badawi (1974) made a distinction between ِfuṣḥā ِ al-tuđāt (meaning fuṣḥā of the literary heritage) and ِfuṣḥā ِ al-‘aṣr (contemporary fuṣḥā).

Since the main purpose of this study is to analyze the explicit debate concerning variability in Arabic in the Middle East and since in the Arab world the distinction between MSA and CA is usually not made, I will use the term (al-) fuṣḥā or (al-) faṣīḥah in order to refer to both of them, drawing the distinction between MSA and CA only when necessary.

Because of its close association with written discourse fuṣḥā is often also called in Arabic ‘luqat al-kitābah’ (the writing language)8 or the ‘al-luqah al-maktabah’ (the written language). Although its oral renderings are often actually the reading aloud of a written text or have at least a written preparation (such as news casts or official speeches), fuṣḥā is also sometimes spontaneously spoken, though only in very formal contexts.

Because there are no native speakers of fuṣḥā, it can only be acquired through formal education. Although standard languages all over the world are to a certain extent non-native and need to be taught through formal education,9 the position of fuṣḥā seems to differ from the position of other standard languages in some respects, which I will briefly explain now.

**How does fuṣḥā relate to other varieties of Arabic?**

Very often it has been argued that the main difference between the Arabic language situation and other language situations lies in the fact that the linguistic differences between fuṣḥā and the other varieties of Arabic are much more significant than those between other standard languages and their 'dialects.' Differences between fuṣḥā and non-fuṣḥā varieties do exist on all linguistic levels, and in some cases these differences can indeed be considerable. Some researchers have also distinguished general characteristics that are shared by most non-fuṣḥā varieties

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8 I am aware of the fact that ‘the writing language’ is not a very current expression in English. However I prefer to use it since it enables me to maintain the subtle difference between ‘luqat al-kitābah’ (which means literally ‘the language of writing’ or ‘the writing language’) and the ‘al-luqah al-maktabah’ (which literally means ‘the written language,’ maktabah being a passive participle). In other contexts both constructions can be easily translated as ‘the written language.’

9 Joseph (1987) states that ‘the standard language is not ‘native’ to anyone, being a higher cultural endowment with functions that cannot be mastered until after the period of normal first-language acquisition. If the standard were ‘native’ to a given person, he or she would not need to study it. Native Anglophone students all through their education take course in ‘English’, Hispanophones in ‘español,’ and so on, in which they study a dialect which is not their own, but foreign to them’ (Joseph, 1987: 17). Other studies on standardization and standard languages are Milroy & Milroy (1985) and Haas (ed.) (1982).
and that mark them as different from *fuṣḥā.* Conversely, it can be said that *fuṣḥā* has characteristics that cannot be found in any non-*fuṣḥā* variety. As such they can be considered ‘*fuṣḥā* markers.’

On the other hand, many linguistic features or items can have a ‘shared status,’ which means that they cannot be marked as *fuṣḥā* or non-*fuṣḥā.* Examples of shared phonological features are the realization of *iq* which is shared by both *fuṣḥā* and the Iraqi *qetu*-dialects and the realization of interdental *ṭ* and *ḏ* which is shared by rural and Bedouin Jordanian dialects and *fuṣḥā.* Shared items can also be found on the lexico-semantic level, whether or not with a similar morphophonological realization. Mazraani gives the following examples. The verb with the root *q-w-l* (to say) has a shared lexico-semantic status: it is used in both *fuṣḥā* and Cairene Arabic (CrA), having the same meaning in both varieties. However, *q-w-l* has a different morphophonological shape in *fuṣḥā*: *gāla* (3rd p.sing.masc.past) – *yaqāla* (3rd p.sing.masc.present) and in CrA: *ʿāl* – *yiʿāl* (Mazraani, 1997: 53). Other verbs can have a shared lexico-semantic status and a shared morpho-phonological shape: *yaʾnī* (3rd p.masc.sing.pres., ‘he/it means’) has the same meaning, as well as the same morphophonological shape in both *fuṣḥā* and CrA. Mazraani calls these verbs ‘multivalent verbs’: ‘their MPP [morphophonology] is not marked as exclusively dialectal, and lexically, they are not the exclusive “property” of the dialect either’ (Mazraani, 1997: 72).

These are of course only two examples, but what I am trying to show is that some linguistic features are markedly *fuṣḥā* or non-*fuṣḥā,* while other features do not have such a clear status, but rather, in Mazraani’s words, a ‘shared’ status.

Moreover, because of the increasing influence of education and the media, a growing number of people are more and more exposed to *fuṣḥā.* Consequently, many *fuṣḥā* lexical items and expressions have become so widely used, that they have been integrated in the non-*fuṣḥā* varieties (with or without morphophonological adaptations), and as such they cannot be considered strictly *fuṣḥā* (anymore). In earlier times, these *fuṣḥā* words and expressions were mainly limited to religious words and expressions, such as ‘*qurʾān,*’ ‘*lā hawla wa lā quwwata ʿilla bi-llāh*’ (‘there is no power and no strength save in God’), but now

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10 The most important of these characteristics are the complete loss of ‘*iʿrāb* (inflection, case and mood endings) with the exception of a few frozen forms, and as a result, a stronger tendency towards analytical constructions (with different realizations in different varieties), the loss of dual forms for adjectives, the omission of the verb complementiser *ʿan,* a different negative system (which again is variously realized in different varieties), the verb *šaʿ* (to see) instead of ‘*raʿ*’*a*’. However, it might be useful to turn things around and say that there are some linguistic characteristics that are marked as *fuṣḥā,* and not found in non-*fuṣḥā,* such as ‘*iʿrāb,* dual forms for adjectives, verb complementiser *ʿan,* a negative system that combines negative particles with ‘*iʿrāb,* the verb ‘*raʿ*’*a*’ (to see). ... For a discussion of the features shared by the spoken varieties that differentiate them as a whole from *fuṣḥā* and possible implications for the theories about the origins of modern spoken varieties, see Ferguson (1959), Cohen (1962), Kaye (1976) and Miller (1986).
they include a wide range of political, scientific, economic and cultural terms and expressions.

In other languages dialects can also differ considerably from the standard language while the communities are not found to be ‘diglossic’ (see below). Although one can make comparisons between varieties of the same language or related languages on different linguistic levels and conclude how much and in which ways these varieties or languages differ, it remains both methodologically difficult and theoretically impossible to draw strict linguistic boundaries between varieties or languages. Thus, the perception and evaluation of differences and/or similarities between language varieties or languages also have to be taken into consideration. These hardly ever have a purely linguistic basis: similarities and differences can be alternatively stressed or downplayed on ideological grounds.

So, whereas many speakers of Hindi and Urdu will stress the fact that they speak ‘separate languages’, (although the ‘purely linguistic’ differences between both languages are said to be negligible),¹¹ speakers of (sometimes mutually unintelligible) varieties of Arabic will stress the fact that they speak the ‘same language’. In other words ‘[c]ultural categories of communication, such as named languages, dialects, standards, speech communities and genres, are constructed out of the messy variability of spoken interaction’ (Gal & Woolard 1995:129). [emphasis mine] Ideology then, often determines which differences are perceived or not, and which differences are (considered to be) relevant or important, and which are not. (This point will be elaborated below.)

The main question is then not so much how different or how similar fushā and non-fushā varieties are on a purely linguistic level, but rather how these differences are perceived and evaluated within the Arabic speech community and how this influences actual language use.

¹¹ The same can be said about Serbo-Croatian.
PRESTIGE AND LINGUISTIC STANDARDS

In the Arab world all Arabic varieties other than fiṣḥā are given the general labels ʿāmmīyah (literally: ‘the language of the common people/the masses’), dārīgah (lit: ‘the current/common language’) or ‘lahḡah’ (lit: ‘dialect’ or ‘variety’). These three terms can be translated, depending on the context in which they are used, as ‘colloquial,’ ‘vernacular,’ ‘dialect,’ or ‘variety.’ These varieties are also often referred to with the label ‘al-luḡah al-mahḍiyah’ (the spoken language).

The fact that in Arabic these terms tend to be used as interchangeable synonyms is quite misleading, because they have very different connotations.

First of all, the term al-ʿāmmīyah has a strong class connotation since it is an adjective derived from al-ʿāmmah, which can be translated as ‘the common folk’ or the ‘masses.’ In that sense, it is suggested that al-ʿāmmīyah is only spoken by the common folk. However, all social classes in the Arab world, the elites included, use in their daily conversations a language variety that is different from al-fiṣḥā.

The term ‘al-luḡah al-mahḍiyah’ suggests that the varieties referred to are not written. However, even though the majority of written texts adhere to the written norms of al-fiṣḥā, throughout history there have always been written texts that, for various reasons, deviated from the written norms of al-fiṣḥā.

Moreover, by using collective terms for all varieties deviating from al-fiṣḥā, it is suggested that their deviation is a basic common characteristic, despite the enormous variability that is covered by such terms.12

What is even more important is that such collective terms suggest that all these varieties have the same status, namely that of non-prestigious colloquials. Although many of the non-fiṣḥā varieties can be rightly called ‘dialects,’ ‘vernaculars’ or ‘colloquials,’ other non-fiṣḥā varieties actually do have a lot of prestige and are used in speech contexts that are much wider than the ones one might expect ‘dialects,’ ‘vernaculars’ or ‘colloquials’ to be used in.13

On a local level, many (mostly urban) varieties function as local or regional prestige forms. This means that speakers of other linguistic varieties will often try to imitate these varieties in contexts in which they feel that their own vernacular is not understood or not appropriate. In many Arab states, because of the political and cultural dominance of the capital, the variety spoken by the urban classes in the capital also functions as a national prestige form.

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12 See also Chapter 4 for an analysis of these labels and the way in which they are used in the debate in Al-Muqtajaf.

13 For further discussion see Haeri (1996), Hoeks (1986, 1995), Ibrahim (1986)
So, for instance, Cairene Arabic is not only a locally prestigious variety, it can also be considered the national Egyptian standard and it also has a lot of prestige on a pan-Arab level. Because of Cairo's role as a political, economic and administrative center in Egypt, Cairene Arabic has come to represent the 'Egyptian dialect' (al-'āmmiyah al-miṣrīyah) or 'Egyptian Arabic' (al-'arabīyah al-miṣrīyah). It is the variety most often used in films and soap operas, 'lighter' television and radio programs and many broadcasted interviews. When language schools for non-native speakers of Arabic offer the option 'Egyptian Arabic' in their curricula, it is mostly Cairene Arabic that is taught. Moreover, Cairo was for a long time an important cultural and political center in the Arab world, where many important newspapers were published and a lot of films and soap operas were produced that circulated and still circulate all over the Arab world. As a result, Cairene Arabic is widely understood and it has prestige in the Arab world, an effect that was further strengthened by the fact that many Egyptians worked as expatriate teachers all over the Arab world. This explains why Egyptians generally feel more comfortable speaking their variety in interactions with other Arabs, while non-Egyptian Arabs tend to converge to Egyptian linguistic features in conversations with Egyptians. Moreover, many Maghribians show a tendency to switch towards 'Egyptian' in informal conversations with people from the Middle East in general, not necessarily Egyptians. It also offers an explanation for the fact that many Egyptian non-fuṣḥā characteristics can be found on some formal speech levels in Egypt, while in most other Arab countries non-fuṣḥā elements tend to be more suppressed on similar speech levels. For instance, even in news broadcasts the alveolar fricative /ɣ/ (fuṣḥā) is systematically realized as a velar plosive /ɡ/ (Cairene/Egyptian), so that /ɣ/ has become part of fuṣḥā in Egypt (with the exception of recitations of the Koran).

Other examples of regionally prestigious non-fuṣḥā varieties are for instance the variety spoken by Sunni Muslims in Bahrain, the Muslim Baghdadi

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14 The use of the term 'standard' should not be confused with 'standard language.' Cairene Arabic lacks some fundamental characteristics that are associated with standard languages: it has no official status and although it is sometimes used as a written medium (mainly in personal letters, non-fuṣḥā poetry, and cartoons) it is basically used as an oral medium. On the other hand it has some characteristics that are associated with standard languages: a certain degree of codification (because of its limited use as a written medium and because it is taught to non-native students of Arabic in several language schools), (covert) linguistic prestige because of its association with urbanity and the capital.

15 Mazraani remarks that 'Egyptians feel confident and proud of their dialect, and rarely change it in making speeches or in cross-dialectal conversations, retaining many Egyptian localisms which are understood outside Egypt' (Mazraani, 1997: 194).
Basic features of variability in Arabic

(gelet-) variety in Iraq and the urban varieties of Aleppo and Damascus in Syria. The linguistic prestige of these varieties is related to the social prestige of dominant (religious, sectarian, socio-economic and/or ethnic) groups in society.

Being basically a modernized classical language, 
\textit{fush\d{a}} cannot be associated with the vernacular of any social or regional group in the Arab world. So, even if \textit{fush\d{a}} no doubt has a lot of overt prestige because of its associations with Islam, pan-Arab nationalism, and as the language of a rich cultural and literary heritage, this prestige is mostly of an abstract kind. Holes (1995) observes that mainly because of this, in most oral and face-to-face interactions, the prestige of specific non-
\textit{fush\d{a}} varieties seems to be more relevant than the prestige of \textit{fush\d{a}}:

‘The linguistic prestige conferred by the oral use of MSA, or something like it, is undeniable, but it is an ‘overt’, non-local type of prestige, inappropriate and irrelevant to most of the speech contexts encountered in daily life.’ (Holes, 1995: 272)

This is most clearly illustrated by the fact that even when some variants of a ‘stigmatized’ variety\textsuperscript{17} are identical to \textit{fush\d{a}} variants, but deviate from prestigious non-
\textit{fush\d{a}} variants, they can be replaced by such non-\textit{fush\d{a}} variants. From a normative perspective, where \textit{fush\d{a}} is considered to be the ‘norm’ or ‘standard,’ this means then, that ‘correct’ forms are replaced by ‘incorrect’ forms. A few examples will illustrate this.

For instance, in Bahrain the variety spoken by the Sunni Muslims (‘Arab) can be considered the Bahraini prestige form. This means that Bahraini Shi’ite Muslims (Baharna) when interacting with Sunnis tend to adapt to the linguistic features of the Sunnis. One of the characteristics of Sunni Bahraini Arabic is the realization of the phoneme /\textipa{\textgamma}/ (alveolar affricate) as /\textipa{\textgamma}/ (palatal fricative). In the Shi’ite variety /\textipa{\textgamma}/ is realized as /\textipa{\textgamma}/, just as in \textit{fush\d{a}}. However when interacting with Sunnis they will often switch to the Sunni variant even when it is in opposition with the \textit{fush\d{a}} variant. (Holes 1983, Abd-El-Jawad 1987). Holes observes that the educated variety of the ‘Arab dialect has become a standard for Bahrain as a whole and that it is used in almost all attempts to represent ‘typical’ Bahraini speech (Holes, 1995: 276). Another well-known example concerns the realization of the interdental fricatives /\textipa{\textgamma}/ en /\textipa{\textgamma}/ which is a feature shared by \textit{fush\d{a}} and rural and Bedouin varieties in Jordan. Urban speakers, however, pronounce them mostly as dental plosives, respectively [d] en [t], or as sibilants [z] en [s]. Many (mostly female) rural speakers tend to switch towards this pronunciation when interacting

\textsuperscript{16} For an elaborate discussion of the sociolinguistic situation in Bahrain, see Holes (1987), Holes (1995).

\textsuperscript{17} It is important to note that varieties that are stigmatized in some contexts are not in others. For instance, a rural variety can be stigmatized in interactions with speakers of urban varieties, but can be highly valued for in-group interactions.
with urban speakers even though, again, this is 'less correct.' Finally, non-Muslims in Baghdad (speakers of a qeltu-dialect, see above) tend to switch from /g/, which is shared with ḥaṣa, to /gl/ when interacting with Muslims (speakers of a gelet-dialect).

These cases clearly illustrate the argument that in some contexts the prestige of ḥaṣa is overruled by the prestige of prestigious non-ḥaṣa varieties. In other words, when a linguistic feature is shared by ḥaṣa and a non-prestigious (stigmatized) variety, the association with the stigmatized variety seems to be stronger than its association with ḥaṣa.

This discussion illustrates that the official standard language is not necessarily the only prestigious variety in a speech community and that notions such as 'linguistic prestige' and 'linguistic standard' do not necessarily mean the same in different language situations. What we notice, then, is the fact that in the Arabic speech community two different sets of 'norms' or 'standards' are operative: one as an official pan-Arabic standard, having a lot of overt, but very abstract non-situated prestige, namely ḥaṣa, and other, not officially recognized, non-ḥaṣa 'standards', having covered, but more relevant prestige in situated oral face-to-face interactions. In such interactions the use of ḥaṣa is even felt to be inappropriate and is often ridiculed, which takes us to the issue of diglossia.

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18 For a discussion of the notions 'prestige' and 'standard' in Arabic see also Ibrahim (1986).
DIGLOSSIA AND CODE-SWITCHING

Marçais (1930) and Ferguson (1959) introduced the concept ‘diglossia’ to describe this particular linguistic situation of norms for the use of *fushā* and non-*fushā* varieties, and the way they are evaluated within the speech community. Because the concept gave rise to a vast literature on diglossia in which it was often used in ways that differ from what Ferguson actually meant, I think it is useful to quote the original definition:

‘[A] relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards) there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. […] [D]iglossia differs from the more widespread standard-with-dialects in that no segment of the speech community in diglossia regularly uses H as a medium of ordinary conversation, and any attempt to do so is felt to be either pedantic or artificial (Arabic, Greek) […] In the more usual standard-with-dialects situation the standard is often similar to the variety of a certain region or social group (e.g., Tehran Persian, Calcutta Bengali) which is used in ordinary conversation more or less naturally by members of the group and as a superposed variety by others.’ (Ferguson, 1959: 336)

This means that the linguistic norms for most written discourse and for oral official and highly formal discourse (e.g. political speeches, religious discourse, and university lectures) differ considerably from the norms for oral face-to-face interactions and ordinary conversation.19 The use of *fushā* in these contexts is often ridiculed or felt to be pedantic.

One should not conclude, however, that there is a strict functional division between *fushā* and non-*fushā* varieties or that we can assign specific varieties to specific contexts or speech situations. A clear functional division between *fushā* and non-*fushā* is suggested by Ferguson in the same article: ‘One of the most important features of diglossia is the specialization of function for H [*fushā*] and L [non- *fushā*]. In one set of situations only H is appropriate and in another only L, with the two sets overlapping only very slightly’ (Ferguson, 1959: 328). H would then be used for a sermon in church or mosque; a personal letter; a speech in parliament, a political speech; a university lecture; a news broadcast; a newspaper

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19 Oral face to face interactions are not necessarily ‘informal.’ For instance, a business conversation between two businessmen who meet for the first time, or a conversation between a university student and his/her professor can be quite formal.
editorial, a news story or the caption on a picture; and poetry. L would be used for instructions to servants, waiters, workmen, clerks; a conversation with family members, friends, colleagues; radio 'soap opera'; the caption on a political cartoon; and folk literature (Ferguson, 1959: 329). However, close observation shows that in most of Ferguson's 'H-contexts' H is not invariably used. The analyses of fragments of a sermon in a mosque in Upper Egypt (El-Hassan, 1977), a university lecture (El-Hassan, 1977), political speeches (Holes, 1993; Mazraani, 1997) illustrate this clearly. Counterexamples can also be given for personal letters (which are not necessarily completely written in H) and speeches in parliament (El-Hassan, 1977). On the other hand, in conversations with family, friends and colleagues; in captions on political cartoons or radio soap opera's (Ferguson's L-contexts), L is not invariably used either.

Just like speakers of other languages, Arabic language users, more often than not, do not strictly adhere to one variety or another within a certain context, but consciously or unconsciously code-switch or style-shift depending on highly variable factors. As in other speech communities, linguistic interaction is a highly dynamic process defying essentialist views of a one-to-one relationship between language and context, and it should be described and analyzed as such. Research on code-switching in Arabic and other speech communities has shown that it is not always random, but communicatively functional.

Theoretically, the combination of fushā and non-fushā components can occur on all linguistic levels: between or within stretches of discourse, between or within sentences or phrases, or between or within words. Nonetheless, not all theoretical combinations are necessarily 'possible,' language use revealing a wide range of co-occurrence patterns of fushā and non-fushā components. Mazraani (1997) has analyzed aspects of functional variation in speeches of three Arab political leaders, namely Gamal Abd El-Nasser, Muammar El-Khadafi and Saddam Hussein. Although political discourse is considered to be a typical H situation where the use of fushā is the overt norm, the three politicians under consideration make highly meaningful switches to non-fushā forms. Although the different sociolinguistic situations in Egypt, Iraq and Libya influence the concrete realization of the switches, some general patterns can be observed, concerning the co-occurrence of fushā and non- fushā forms, as well as in the communicative functionality of the switches. Among Mazraani's findings is the fact that verbs with a MSA (fushā) lexical-semantic status do not/cannot occur in some non-MSA (non-fushā) morphophonological forms.20

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20 For instance, in the Egyptian data verbs with an MSA morphophonological semantic status cannot co-occur with the following non-MSA morphophonological elements: (1) performative yi- (*tibā'īdu (tubā'īdu in fushā), (2) shortening of long vowel (*yatagawabu (yatagawabu in fushā), (3) deletion and prosthetaization of vowel (*thāwāt (thahwāt in fushā),
Basic features of variability in Arabic

The politician is observed to use a standard form of language, *fushā*, when he wants 'to inform and educate the public, recall history, articulate and announce policy, or otherwise present himself as a powerful figure.' On the other hand, when he wants 'to appear friendly, to establish a sense of contact, solidarity and shared goals with the public [...] the use of dialect [non- *fushā*] is more effective, because this is the normal vehicle for the expression of such affective layers of meaning in everyday life. Politicians may want their ideas to have an impact on the public, and use the dialect to make some abstract concepts more readily understood' (Mazraani, 1997: 213). Holes (1993) came to similar conclusions in his analysis of speeches by Gamal Abd El-Nasser. These examples, of course, still suggest a functional distribution, but rather one that is more subtle and flexible, because it is not strictly event-bound.

Code-switching and style-shifting should, however, not only be seen in terms of 'standardizing' (switch from non-*fushā* to *fushā*) or 'colloquializing' (switch from *fushā* to non-*fushā*), but also as 'dialect-leveling', when one switches from one 'dialect' to another. This has already been illustrated by the examples given above, in which speakers are observed to switch from their own (stigmatized) vernacular to the (local) non-*fushā* prestigious variety. Many instances of code-switching in Arabic (international) cross-dialectal conversations can also be found in the 'Leeds corpus.' This corpus was collected in four Arab countries, namely Egypt, Syria, Jordan (including the West Bank), and Kuwait. The data consist of spontaneous conversations between native (Egyptian, Jordanian-Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese) speakers of Arabic, both men and women, who considerably vary in age and occupation.

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4) 'i'rab being the stylistically highest MSA marker, cannot co-occur with CA [Cairene Arabic] dialectal markers (*tammāna (tannakānna in *fushā*),
5) the glottal stops are not deleted and the vowel lengthened as they would be if dialectal rules were applied (*yatāhhabba (ya'tāhhabba in *fushā*),
6) the dialectal past tense lexical enclitic is not found with an MSA verb (*tahāwīt (tahāwā in *fushā*),
7) dialectal aspectual prefix b- is not found with purely MSA verbs (*btubā'īdu (tabā'īdu in *fushā*).

(Mazraani 1997 66-67)

21 One of the limitations of the literature on the style continuum between 'dialect' and *fushā* is the attempts towards a division of this continuum in varieties of 'colloquialized *fushā*' and 'standardized colloquial' ((Blanc (1960), Badawi (1973), Meiseles (1980)) is that they take only variability in terms of mixture between *fushā* and dialect into consideration, but not between different dialects.


23 El-Hassan (1977) mentions that the informant's ages range from 17 to 60 years and that the following occupational categories are represented: students, teachers and lecturers, civil servants, private business employees, singers, musicians and actors, writers and journalists, politicians and diplomats, doctors, and engineers (El-Hassan, 1977: 120).
Because the researchers conceive their data as a distinguishable variety of Arabic, namely Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA), for which they try to work out a grammar that includes regional and stylistic variation, they do not analyze it explicitly in terms of code-switching. But, whether we conceive the instances of language use in the corpus as yet another variety of Arabic (ESA) or as instances of code-switching and style shifting, some interesting examples of convergence are given, instances in which speakers try to avoid localisms in order to obtain mutual intelligibility, on the one hand, and to avoid ridicule (if one uses 'stigmatized' forms), on the other. The analysis also shows that the observed variation is patterned, and that not all theoretical possibilities are exploited in practice.

The analysis of real-life data thus clearly shows that 'diglossia' as a model for language use is too limited and too simplistic. Language users develop, consciously and unconsciously, dynamic linguistic strategies when communicating, and these should be taken into consideration in any description of language use.

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24 Mitchell (1986) observes that 'powerful influences, emotive and other, of (inter)nationalism, mass education, and urbanization' their exists 'the urge to koniéze Arab speech' (Mitchell, 1986: 7), which results in the interplay between written and vernacular Arabic (Mitchell, 1986: 8). This interplay is reinforced 'by the substantial similarity of the grammatical base of the several vernaculars' (Mitchell, 1986: 7) and 'the durability and transferability of an overtly shared written language' (Mitchell, 1986: 8). One can wonder, however, whether it is useful to consider the data as yet another variety of Arabic and this for the following reasons: First of all, I think that more research on (international) inter-dialectal communication is needed. Furthermore, describing language use in terms of code-switching and style-shifting stresses more the dynamic character of language use, while seeing it as a variety wrongly suggests some kind of 'stability.'
CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion is that we cannot use the concept ‘diglossia’ to describe and explain actual language use, but still it remains an interesting model to understand the (overt) norms of language use or the ‘metapragmatic norms’ of the Arabic speech community (Haeri, 1996). So in Ferguson’s H situations (such as religious sermons, political discourse etc.), the overt norm will be the use of fushā, while in the L situations (informal conversations etc.), it is the use of a non-fushā variety. The discussion above has shown that these overt norms are often breached in practice, so that we can conclude that the (covert) norms as they appear in actual language use, are not always congruous with the established overt norms.

Another conclusion is that fushā is not the only prestigious variety in the Arabic speech community, but that there are other prestigious competing non-fushā varieties (although they are not necessarily recognized as such).

A few pertinent questions then impose themselves. From which moment on and how did the Arabic linguistic situation become like this? Why do the overt norms differ so much from the covert norms of actual language use? Why are the norms that are covertly established in language use not recognized? Has this situation ever been contested, and if so, under which circumstances and which ‘solutions’ have been proposed?

It is obvious that there is no simple and straightforward answer to these questions. Further research on the historical development of Arabic and specifically its codification and standardization is needed. The establishment of the linguistic norms always involves decisions and choices concerning linguistic variability. In the case of Arabic, the scholars who were actively involved in its codification and standardization in the 8th and 10th centuries, basically had to deal with the linguistic variability in the Koran (the so-called readings, qira’āt), in pre-Islamic poetry and the linguistic variants of the Arab tribes (lugāt).

These linguistic developments were taking place in the context of the establishment of Islamic jurisprudence and the expansion of an Islamic empire, which brought the Arab Muslims in contact with ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity. We may assume that the linguistic debates that were undoubtedly triggered by the need to establish linguistic norms for Arabic were influenced by these ‘non-linguistic’ developments.

Once the norms of fushā were established, it was preserved by a small elite of religious specialists, ‘ulamā’. The fact that fushā was used only by this small group of literates might help to explain why it was used in quite a homogenous way (Holt, 1996: 14). As such, it should not come as a surprise that the linguistic norms by which fushā was characterized became questioned only from the moment when it was spread to larger numbers of the population, basically through
education and the printed media. (These developments will be discussed in detail in the next chapter).

However, the linguistic reform proposals, in which the exclusive use of *fuṣḥā* as a written language was seriously questioned, were rejected by the majority of the Arab intelligentsia. In the following chapters I will deal with the debate that was triggered by such reform proposals: namely the polemical debate concerning the desirability of changing the linguistic norms for written language use.

I think that a detailed analysis of the *fuṣḥā*-’āmmīyah debate can provide us with a deeper insight into some of the reasons for the observed discrepancy between overt and covert linguistic norms, since it can help us to grasp better the linguistic and social, political and religious considerations underlying the choice of the majority of Arab intellectuals not to change the linguistic norms for written language use.
Chapter 2: The broad context of historical developments

**INTRODUCTION**

Diversity in Arabic, as briefly sketched in Chapter 1, has been the object of public debate for a long time. The way in which linguistic variability is perceived never has a purely linguistic basis alone and its perception is often influenced by social, religious and/or political considerations. Therefore, one of my main points of departure is that in public linguistic debates, especially debates concerning linguistic variability, there is always more at stake than language alone and that these debates are always anchored in a context with which they are mutually constitutive. This means that the debate is not only influenced by the general historical (social, political, religious) context in which it is conducted, but also that its outcome can influence these non-linguistic realities. This also means that a linguistic debate is generally part of, or intersects with, (an)other larger or smaller debate(s).

As we will see, the *fushā-'ammīyah* debate was opened and developed during a period in which several other important debates were conducted in the Middle East. The most encompassing one was (and to a certain extent still is) conducted in the Middle East, namely the debate concerning modernization, which includes all major aspects of society, such as religion, secularization, political and social organization, as well as language. The modernization debate is strongly interrelated with the debate concerning Westernization, although the two debates cannot be considered completely identical.

The *fushā-'ammīyah* debate must be considered as part of these larger debates on modernization, Westernization and secularization which themselves form a coherent whole. But, as we will see, it is also interrelated with the debate on political organization and national identity, as it intersects with other linguistic debates on the orthography of Arabic and the Arabicization of terminology derived from other, mainly Western languages. In the context of this study, we can only pay attention to these other debates insofar as they are important for the analysis of the *fushā-'ammīyah* debate.

Nevertheless, in order to understand the position and development of the *fushā-'ammīyah* debate, we have to pay due attention to some general historical developments that preceded and coincided with it.

At the end of Chapter 1, I raised the question why the Arabic linguistic situation was not seriously and at a large scale questioned before the end of the 19th century. In this chapter I will focus on the historical developments before and during the 19th century that prepared the ground for and coincided with the beginnings of the *fushā-'ammīyah* debate. I will mainly focus on broad historical developments, such
as modernization and increasing Western influence in the Middle East, and the way in which these developments induced educational change, the growing use of the printing press and the onset of the political disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.

I will focus on the general impact of these developments, as well as their specific local manifestations, mainly in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria, since the journals that formed the forum for the debate in the 19th and early 20th centuries were mainly published in Beirut, Cairo and Damascus.

Even though increasing Western influence was a general tendency in the Middle East, Westernization followed different patterns in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria. In Egypt, Western influence was felt in the modernization policies of Muḥammad ʿAlī (r. 1805-1848) and his grandson Ismāʿīl (r. 1863-1879). In Lebanon, with its large Christian population, the missionaries played a particularly important role, while in Syria, which was under a more direct Ottoman control, Westernization often followed from Ottoman policies.

There were also several forms of interaction between the regions themselves. Apart from the fact that they were all part of the Ottoman Empire and thus were part of the same political framework, and that commercial and other connections existed between these Ottoman provinces, some other specific instances of exchange during the 19th century have to be mentioned.

In the beginning of the century, several Lebanese and Syrian students studied medicine and other subjects in the modern state schools founded by Muḥammad ʿAlī (Khalaf, 1979: 36). From 1830 until 1841 the Egyptians occupied Syria and Lebanon. In general, the control of the central state over these areas was extended, a few modern state schools were opened in cities, Egyptian publications that were printed since the 1820s on the Bālāq presses were distributed in Syria and Lebanon, and several limitations on the freedom of religious minorities were abolished. Extensive exchanges also took place when at the end of the century many Syrians and Lebanese immigrated into Egypt, mainly to avoid Ottoman suppression and restrictive press laws. As we will see, most of the Lebanese and Syrian journals that formed the forum for the fiṣḥa-ʿammīyah debate, were at the end of the 19th century published in Cairo.

As should appear from the discussion below, modernization was the result of a complex interaction between Ottoman, Western and local factors.

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1 Maritime trade existed especially between the Lebanese ports of Sidon, Tripoli and Beirut and the Egyptian ports of Alexandria and Damiette. For ages, Damascus had been the assembly point for pilgrims to Mecca.
THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL ARABIC-SPEAKING ELITES IN EGYPT, LEBANON AND SYRIA WITHIN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Political organization of the Ottoman provinces

When the fiṣḥā-ʿāmmīyah debate was opened in 1881, the Middle East had been under Ottoman control since 1516. According to Tibawi (1969), the Ottomans originally confirmed an already established feudal order. The Empire was divided into several administrative units or provinces (wilāyat or ʾilāyāt in Arabic, vilayet in Turkish), which were governed by a governor who had the title of pasha. Each of these provinces was further divided into several districts and sub-districts. At the end of the 18th century the Levant consisted of four provinces, those of Aleppo, Damascus, Tripoli and Sidon. The district around Gaza had an exceptional independent status. The basic principle of Ottoman organization was decentralization of provincial autonomy, but generally Ottoman provincial governors or pashas were appointed only for short terms in order to avoid too large a concentration of power independent of the Sultan in Istanbul (Tibawi, 1969: 23-25, 30). West of these provinces was the province of Egypt, which was locally ruled by the Mamluks.

Even though the Ottoman Empire was not officially dissolved until after World War I, the beginnings of its political disintegration started much earlier. Toward the end of the 18th century, central power had become very weak and during the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire was not only stripped of several provinces, which became independent7 or were occupied by foreign powers8, several of its provinces also gained a large degree of autonomy or semi-independence, while remaining officially within an Ottoman framework. In the Middle East, the province Egypt and the districts of Mount Lebanon and Acre gained the largest degree of autonomy, while never abandoning the official recognition of Ottoman supremacy.4 These developments coincided with and were enhanced by a reshuffling of the ruling elites and sub-elites: in most provinces, a local, mostly Arabic-speaking elite succeeded in establishing itself.

In the following sections I will discuss the ways in which these developments took place in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria.

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7 In 1830 Serbia became an independent state and Greece was declared an independent kingdom in 1833.

8 France occupied Algeria in 1830, while Britain occupied Aden in 1832. In July 1853 a war between Russia and the Ottomans was started for the Crimea.

4 Hourani (1992) mentions that the tendencies toward enhanced autonomy emerged in almost all the Ottoman provinces. The exceptions were the provinces that were in immediate reach of the Ottoman central power, such as the province of Aleppo in northern Syria (Hourani, 1992: 250-252).
Egypt

In Egypt, Muhammad 'Ali (r. 1805-1848), (Mehmet Ali in Turkish), an Albanian Ottoman army officer who was sent out to Egypt became the Ottoman governor of Egypt in 1805. He not only safeguarded Egypt's autonomy and became its first viceroy, but he also succeeded in making his government hereditary. The successor of his son İbrahim (r. 1848), 'Abbás Ḥilmi I (r. 1848-1854) further secured the hereditary principle. The resulting dynasty descending from Muhammad 'Ali remained officially in power in Egypt until the Free Officers deposed king Faruq in 1952.

In his study about mid-nineteenth-century Egyptian state and society, Toledano (1990) argued that during the reign of 'Abbás Ḥilmi I an Ottoman Egyptian elite emerged and replaced the former Ottoman elite. The main characteristic of this ethnically diverse elite that was mainly composed of high military and bureaucrats was its Ottoman culture — knowledge of Turkish was one of the indispensable requisites to belong to this elite — and its strong commitment to serve Egypt under an Ottoman-Egyptian dynasty. The administrative language at the time was Turkish. During this period a non-Ottoman mainly Arabic-speaking sub-elite formed the link between this Egyptian Ottoman elite and the local mostly Arabic-speaking non-elite groups. This sub-elite included rich merchants, high ranking 'ulamā', the leaders of Sufi-orders and rural notables. Even if they had no direct political power, they could exercise some indirect power by influencing the Ottoman Egyptian elite.

Due to educational developments during the 19th century, some components of this Arabic-speaking sub-elite, mainly the sons of the rural notability who were educated in the modern secular state schools, became more dominant toward the end of the century, and especially during the reigns of Sa'id (r. 1854-1863) and Isma'il (r. 1863-1879). At the turn of the century they formed one of the major sources of political leadership. During the same period and as a result of this tendency and the general rise of speakers of Arabic in the bureaucracy, Arabic gradually replaced Turkish in the administration. (Toledano, 1990: 15-20)

Lebanon

Before it ended up under French mandate in 1920, the geographical area that is now called Lebanon never formed a distinct unit. The state Lebanon was created by fusing the coastal area, of which the main towns were Tripoli, Sidon and Beirut, with Mount Lebanon, which was a rural area.

Since one of the main characteristics of Lebanon was and is its religious and confessional diversity, we will first give a short overview of the different
The broad context of historical developments

communities. The main communities in Lebanon in the 19th century were the Maronite Christians, the Druzes, the Shi’ites, the Sunnites, Greek Orthodox Christians and Greek Catholic Christians. Smaller Christian communities were formed by the Roman Catholics, Syrian Orthodox, Syrian Catholics, Chaldeans and Nestorians. Toward the end of the 19th century a small Protestant community emerged mainly as a result of the proselytizing activities of American and British missionaries. (As we will see below many of these converted Protestant Christians will play an important role in the fushā-‘āmmīyah debate.) There was also small Armenian community settled in Lebanon after 1915.

Of all these groups, the Sunnites, the Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics had the most urban character since they lived mainly in the coastal cities Beirut, Sidon, Tripoli. The Shi’ites lived mainly in the northern parts of the Beqaa valley, in the area of Jabal Amil, Tripoli and Tyros. The Druzes and the Maronites were the dominant groups in Mount Lebanon. However, Makdisi (2000) forcefully argues that

‘[L]ocal communities did not identify themselves tribally or nationally, and they subsumed their religious identities within a political and public space that accommodated differences of faith. Ottoman Lebanese society was shaped less by centuries of sectarian tolerance (or strife) than by a social order that, heuristically speaking, cut Mount Lebanon in two. At the top, an elite community regarded its control over religious and secular knowledge as essential to a hierarchical ordering of society. This community included Lebanese notables and those who chronicled their histories as well as Ottoman government officials and religious leaders. It existed above, exploited, and defined itself against the second community, the ahali, or the common Druze and Maronite villagers constituting the bulk of indigenous society.’ (Makdisi, 2000: 29)

Ascendancy of the Uniate Christians

In the 17th century trading relations between Western countries and the coastal cities of Syria increased. Western traders generally preferred engaging local Christians – mainly Uniates as local business associates because of religious ties

5 The Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics are also called respectively Orthodox Melkites and Uniate Melkites.

6 Outside Lebanon there are also Druze communities in the Hawrān and Northern Galilee.

7 Uniate Christians are those Eastern Christians who formally recognize the supremacy of the Pope, but with the maintenance of their own liturgy, rites and traditions. In the Middle East Maronites, Greek Catholics (also called Uniate Melkites), Catholic Copts, Chaldeans, Syrian Catholics all belong to the Unia with Rome. Their exists also a community of Roman Catholics, who in addition to their recognition of the authority of the Pope also follow the Catholic rite.
and because of their knowledge of foreign languages and their experience in the administration as clerks and scribes. One of the results was that some of these Christians acquired the same privileges as the Europeans living in the Middle East, such as consular protection and tax exemptions, which allowed them to further enhance their commercial opportunities. Haddad (1979) argued that in particular the Greek Catholics also developed a special relationship with the local establishments of those Ottoman provinces that had gained a certain degree of autonomy. These governors

'displayed a willingness to use and protect those elements whose position in relation to the Ottoman government was as irregular as their own, and whose commercial and bureaucratic skills and European connections could be turned to advantage. The Lebanese amirs, Zahir al-Umar at Acre, the Mamluk Beys and later Muhammad 'Ali in Egypt, and to a lesser extent the al-'Azim of Damascus were not to be expected to view the Uniate Melkites in light of Ottoman definitions which held them to be extralegal. The Uniates were simply too valuable to be lightly dismissed.' (Haddad, 1970: 63-4)

This tendency was strengthened by the liberal reforms of Ibrāhīm during the Egyptian occupation of Syria, which stressed religious and confessional equality. In actual practice, this meant that many restrictions on Christians and Jews were lifted: they were allowed to wear white turbans, to ride horses, to carry arms and some special taxes were lifted. Christians and Jews were also for the first time allowed to participate in the administrative and advisory councils, and that they could be enlisted in the army (Tibawi, 1969: 84).

The Ottoman reforms, as formulated in the Tanzimat decrees of 1839 and 1856, which, among other measures\(^8\), also stressed equal rights for all religious, confessional and ethnic communities, further enhanced these tendencies.

Several authors have stressed that even though the reforms launched by the Egyptians and the Tanzimat were officially meant to create equal opportunities for all Ottoman citizens, they were mainly focused on the rights of Christians and that this was mainly due to European influence. As such, instead of creating equality between all Ottoman citizens they further enhanced the imbalance already created by the commercial privileges of the Christian community (Tibawi, 1969: 121-2).

Makdisi (2000) draws attention to the fact that this was made possible by the ambiguous character of the Tanzimat. He argues that even though the Tanzimat

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\(^8\) The Hatt-ı Humâyun decree on 18 February 1856 reiterated the equality of all Ottoman subjects, reaffirmed their security of person, property and honour, confirmed the privileges and immunities granted to all Christian and other non-Muslim communities, guaranteed freedom of belief and worship to all sects irrespective of numbers of adherents, opened the civil service and the army to non-Muslims, confirmed mixed councils and mixed tribunals, and promised gradual substitution of direct taxation to tax-farming (Tibawi, 1969: 117).
had a general secularizing and modernizing content, they allowed for several different readings: the Ottomans saw them mainly as measures to restore their central power over the provinces, the Europeans used them to enhance the position of the Christians they protected, the local Lebanese elites saw them as a means to restore their traditional power, and the common people saw them primarily as a means to obtain equal rights and political participation (Makdisi, 2000: 59-61).

These different interpretations of the Tanzimat and the social imbalances resulting from the Egyptian occupation were among the factors that lay at the basis of several revolts. These revolts also took on a sectarian character. However, in Makdisi’s opinion sectarianism was not a traditional response to modernity, rather it was a product of modernity itself. The local, Ottoman and Western policies all contributed to the creation of a sectarian climate in Mount Lebanon. The administrative reforms, which were made in order to contain the violence, were both based on and created the idea of stable sectarian communities living in defined geographical areas. As such, the measures ‘sectarianized the Lebanese landscape’ (Makdisi, 2000: 78).

In 1842 Mount Lebanon was divided by the Ottomans under strong European pressure into two qa’im-maqāmīyahs or administrative districts. The northern part of Mount Lebanon became a Maronite district with a Maronite qa’im-maqām (district governor) and the southern part a Druze district with a Druze qa’im-maqām. The fact that in many villages in both the Maronite and the Druze district both Maronites and Druzes were living side by side was considered by the British an ‘inconvenience’ that should be taken care of.

‘The logic of partition demanded the unambiguous classification of the local inhabitants into one or the other camp, either Christian or non-Christian. The European-designed partition plan assumed that there were in fact two distinct and separate primordial tribes of Druzes and Maronites to which all Druzes and all Maronites instinctively adhered. Leaving aside the fact that Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic communities resented being under Maronite tutelage, the partition

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9 Among the causes of revolt during the Egyptian occupation were disarmament and taxes, measures that were taken in order to bring Lebanon under a more direct form of state control. At the end of their occupation the Egyptians conscripted Christian troops to suppress a Druze revolt.

10 The idea to reorganize Mount Lebanon as a double qa’im-maqāmīyah, meaning that the Mountain was divided into a Maronite part (the northern part), presided over by a Maronite qa’im-maqām and a Druze part (the southern part) presided over by a Druze qa’im-maqām, was a proposal of the Austrian Prince Metternich and was supported by the signatories of the Convention of London. Note that both qa’im-maqāms remained accountable to the Ottoman governor of Sidon. (Cobban, 1985: 45-6) For further details about the double qa’im-maqāmīyah, see Salibi (1965: 53-79), Khalaf (1979: 69-73), Cobban (1985: 45-48), Makdisi (2000: 78-84).
legitimated sectarian politics by organizing the administration and geography of Mount Lebanon along religious lines.' (Makdisi, 2000: 80)

Several historians have discussed the fights that broke out in 1860 in which thousands of people were killed. Although again many social and economic factors caused the fights, the sectarian reorganization of the Mountain was one of them.  

In 1861 a totally new reorganization of Mount Lebanon was agreed upon by the European and Ottoman negotiators and formulated in the Règlement Organique. This agreement stated that the Mountain became one district, a mutasarrīfīyah, governed by a mutasarrif who was to be an Ottoman, but non-Lebanese Christian. He was to be assisted by a council in which the twelve seats were distributed along sectarian lines: four Maronites, three Druzes, two Greek Orthodox, one Greek Catholic, one Sunni, and one Shi‘ite (Salibi, 1965: 110). This organization remained intact until the creation of the Lebanese state in 1920.

**Syria**

Of all the Levantine provinces, the vilayet of Aleppo was the nearest to Istanbul, geographically as well as psychologically, since it was the province that remained under strict Ottoman control.

In Damascus, as in other Ottoman provinces, toward the end of the 18th century a local Arabic-speaking sub-elite had emerged and had consolidated its power. This sub-elite formed the intermediate link between the Ottoman government in Istanbul and the local population, and as such its power derived from Ottoman recognition, and from its position in the local society. This new class was composed of traditional urban leaders who had had a prestigious socio-religious position since ages and urban leaders who had prestige because of their positions in the army and in commerce, and who managed to acquire positions in the bureaucracy. Khoury (1983) summarizes the situation as follows:

"In the last decades of Ottoman rule these urban leaders and their families were to successfully transform their traditional type of influence into a stabler type of power based on landowning and office-holding in the growing secular wing of the state bureaucracy, a base far better suited to turn-of-the-century Ottoman realities.


12 The so-called Règlement Organique, which reorganized Lebanon as a semi-independent province, a mutasarrīfīyah, was developed and signed by in international commission which was composed of Ottoman, British, French, Russian, Austrian and Prussian representatives. The mutasarrif was to be an Ottoman Catholic Christian, but not a Lebanese (Salibi, 1965: 109-10, Cobban, 1985: 50). For further details on the mutasarrīfīyah and the Règlement Organique, see also Salibi (1965: 106-119), Khalaf (1979: 83-121), Cobban (1985: 50-55), Makdisi (2000: 159-172).
Meanwhile other urban leaders had gained local influence comparatively recently. Their influence was rooted in military and commercial position (often the two went hand in hand) which they also were able to transform into a landowning and office-holding base of power. The point to emphasize here is that the vast majority of urban leaders in Syria came from the network of powerful and influential city leaders that constituted the landowning bureaucratic class.’ (Khoury, 1983: 3)

This dominant urban class did not exist as a self-conscious socio-political unit with common interests before 1840. It was predominantly constituted by Muslims of the Sunni rite and it had emerged from loosely and informally organized political groups with traditional power, namely, the religious establishment (the ‘ulama’) (Muslim religious experts) and the ‘ašraf (descendants of the Prophet) and the ‘agawāt (military chiefs), which were ‘factionalized along family, kinship and economic lines; and which were often rooted in different and often competitive sections of Damascus where their power and influence were most strongly felt’ (Khoury, 1983: 11-13).

Because of the Egyptian occupation, the Ottoman tanẓimat, and commercial developments, these groups merged gradually with a group of tax farmers and merchants that did not have any political power before, into a more cohesive formation. Because of the restructuring that took place after the massacres of 1860, ‘by the end of the century political and social leadership in the town emerged from a single, comparatively cohesive, social class’ (Khoury, 1983: 13).

Centralization
Toward the mid-nineteenth century, as the Ottoman Empire was almost reduced to an Arab-Turkish Empire, the Ottomans wanted to enhance their control over the remaining parts of the Empire through a policy of centralization (of which the Tanẓimat were an important aspect).

As a result, the newly emerged bureaucratic class in Syria was drawn much closer to Ottoman power. Children born to this class were increasingly educated in the modern Ottoman state schools, where – as we mentioned above – the language of education was mainly Turkish, and an increasing number of students completed their studies in Istanbul. Such an education was of course closely related to prospects of a position in the Ottoman bureaucracy. When the first Ottoman parliament was inaugurated in Istanbul, it included many Syrian representatives. Thus they were increasingly drawn into the Ottoman establishment and started to identify themselves much closer with what might be called an Ottoman culture or Ottomanism.

Christians were much less involved in these developments, since they rarely attended the Ottoman state schools. They rather attended private local or missionary schools, where the medium of instruction was Arabic or a foreign language. Another reason why Christians identified less with the Ottoman Empire
was the fact that the power basis of the Ottoman Empire was basically religious; it was an Islamic Caliphate with at the head the Caliph or Prince of the Believers ('amīr al-mu'minīn). In an Islamic empire, Christians (and other non-Muslims) were at best 'protected minorities' (dīnmī), who were not allowed high-level political participation.

Two other groups which did not participate in these developments and who were even opposed to them – but for different reasons – were those members of the Muslim religious establishment as well as secular dignitaries who were not able to obtain a position in the state system (Khoury, 1983: 54-5).
MODERNIZATION, WESTERN INFLUENCE AND COLONIALISM

Political and social changes during the 19th century, as discussed in the previous section, took place in a context of modernization and Westernization. These developments, as I will try to demonstrate, are also crucial for a good understanding of the faṣḥa-‘āmmiyah debate: some of them were conditional for the debate to take the form that it did, while at the same time modernization and Westernization are themselves among the themes of the debate.

Modernization was felt in several domains of society, but at first mainly in the army and the administration, as well as in education, commerce and the introduction of several technical innovations, such as steam shipping, modern roads, railways and telegraphs. Some technical possibilities that had already been known earlier received more extensive usage, such as the printing press.

The relation between modernization and Westernization is a controversial one. Many historians consider the Napoleonic invasion and the subsequent occupation of Egypt and parts of Syria between 1798 and 1801 as the symbolic starting point of the modern era in the Middle East. These authors also tend to stress the role of the West in the modernization process in the Middle East. Other authors, such as Tibawi (1969), contend that the process had already been set in motion before the French occupation.\(^{13}\) Drawing attention to the ‘negative’ impact of the French invasion and to the fact that many ‘pre-modern’ ideas remained undisputed far into modern times, he stresses internal developments as the main forces of early modernization. In his opinion, only its later development was a response to Western challenges.\(^{14}\) As a consequence modernization must be seen as an interplay between native and foreign forces (Tibawi, 1969: 39).

However, even those authors who assess the immediate influence of the West in the modernization of the Middle East critically and who stress native developments, do not deny that the main phases coincided with periods of increased contacts with Western countries and with chains of events which were drawing the Middle East into world economy and politics. For Egypt, these economic developments have been accurately summarized as follows:

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\(^{13}\) This general assertion is supported by Tignor’s (1966) analysis of the Egyptian situation. He states that although Egyptian society before Napoleon was largely a traditional society (by which he means ‘one dominated by undifferentiated structures, by great self-sufficiency of the units, and by recruitment to the various structures by ascription’ (Tignor, 1966: 27)), the bureaucracy, the central economic organization and the religious organization had some characteristics that can be considered ‘modern.’ In these domains recruitment was at least in a limited way based on performance and merit, rather than kinship ties and birth (Tignor, 1966: 27-31).

\(^{14}\) For a more detailed discussion of the situation in Syria, see Tibawi (1969: 140-142).
'From a country which formed one of the hubs in the commerce of the Ottoman world and beyond, and which produced and exported its own food and its own textiles, Egypt was turning into a country whose economy was dominated by the production of a single commodity, raw cotton, for the global textile industry of Europe. By the eve of the First World War, cotton was to account for more than ninety-two per cent of the total value of Egypt's exports. The changes associated with this growth and concentration in exports included an enormous growth in imports, principally of textile products and food, the extension throughout the country of a network of roads, telegraphs, police stations, railways, ports and permanent irrigation canals, a new relationship to the land, which became a privately owned commodity concentrated in the hands of a small powerful and increasingly wealthy social class, the influx of Europeans, seeking to make fortunes, find employment, transform agricultural production or impose colonial control, the building and rebuilding of towns and cities as centres of the new European-dominated commercial life, and the migration to these urban centres of tens of thousands of the increasingly impoverished rural poor. No other place in the world in the nineteenth century was transformed on a greater scale to serve the production of a single industry.' (Mitchell, 1988: 16)

However, this does not necessarily mean that modernization processes were always led by Western forces (which in some cases, even impeded full modernization\footnote{Instances where modernization was impeded by Western influence are the stagnation of modernization at the end of Muhammad 'Ali's reign as an outcome of the limitations put on his possibilities to keep an army, the limited modernization of education during the British occupation (the British were afraid to create an educated and politically aware (and modern) elite, since their experience in India taught them that this elite would also be dissatisfied with the British presence); in the Lebanese Syrian Protestant College, students were expelled when they adhered to ideas that were too radical.}) or that Middle Eastern modernizers uncritically copied Western examples and models. One of our tasks, then, will be to carefully assess the relationship between Ottoman and local modernization policies and Westernization, and the way these developments were received by the local populations.

\textit{Western influence}

Increasing Western influence was at first particularly felt in the political and military arenas. Western political influence, culminating in the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, and the creation of French mandates in the Levant in 1920, drastically increased during the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.

In 1798 Napoleon invaded Egypt and occupied it for three years, expanding his power eastward to Palestine and Syria. Even though the Napoleonic occupation did not last long, it was symbolic for the increasing European interest for and involvement in the Middle East and it can also be seen as the beginning...
point of a renewed Arab awareness of and interest in Europe. The Great Powers, at the time Britain, France, Austria, Prussia, Russia and Italy, started to interfere increasingly in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire. We will give some examples of events that exemplified these tendencies.

When Muḥammad ‘Alī, after establishing his power in Egypt in 1805, succeeded in conquering Syria in 1831, this was condoned by the European powers. But when his military power was about to reach Istanbul, Europeans became directly involved supporting the Ottomans to stop him from conquering the city. In 1840 Britain, Russia, Prussia, Austria and the Ottomans signed the Convention of London, which had to put an end to Muḥammad ‘Alī’s military ambitions in Syria. In 1841 he was eventually expelled by force in a joint effort by Ottoman, British, French and Austrian troops. One of the outcomes of the conflict was that serious limitations were imposed on the army Muḥammad ‘Alī was allowed to have. Since many of the modernization measures taken by the Egyptian viceroy were in fact strongly related to the development of a strong army, the restraints put on his possibilities to develop his military ambitions slowed down the modernization process in Egypt.

In Lebanon each of the European powers had made a claim to ‘protect’ a minority. The French, as well as the Austrians traditionally protected the Maronite and other Uniate Christian communities, while Britain and Russia protected respectively the Druze and the Orthodox Christians.

As we have seen, the Western powers were also strongly involved in the agreements by which the double qāʿimmaqāmīyah was installed in Lebanon in 1841, and the mutaṣarrijīyah in 1861.

Commerce and finance was yet another domain where the Western presence was increasingly felt. French merchants were the first to obtain privileges from the Ottoman authorities, such as exemptions from certain taxes and the right to be heard by their own judges. These rights came to be extended to all Westerners in the Ottoman Empire and are known as the Capitulations. As we will see below, these privileges not only enhanced the position of Western merchants, but eventually also that of their Arab Christians employees.

In Egypt as well a foreign commercial and financial class had emerged. The modernizing measures of both Muḥammad ‘Alī and Ismāʿīl were largely financed with foreign capital. Especially Ismāʿīl borrowed heavily from foreign capitalists in order to implement his expensive modernization schemes. His heavy debts were the main cause for an enhanced Western, mainly French and British control in Egypt between 1876\(^\text{16}\) and 1882, and formed one of the main factors leading to the British occupation.

\(^{16}\) In 1875 the Caisse de la Dette, a financial body composed of English, French, Italian and Austrian representatives in order to arrange a repayment schedule, was installed. From the beginning, the English and the French representatives were dominant in this council.
Because of these political and military events and such forms of socio-economic influence, the Middle East became increasingly aware of Europe and the developments that had been taking place there. In all of the events mentioned above – the list is of course not exhaustive – the European powers were directly involved. In many other domains of society Western influence was more indirect. They included domains such as the reformation of the army and the administration, as well as education and printing. In all these domains Westerners, who were involved as military advisors or as teachers, played an important role alongside local modernizers who were themselves increasingly educated in Western schools (either in Europe or in Western-run private schools) or in the modern state schools, based on Western models.

Before turning to specific developments in these domains we have to pay attention to another development that was strongly related to both education and printing, namely translation.
TRANSLATION

Translation in Egypt
During the 19th century Arab knowledge of Europe increased drastically. The sources of knowledge of the West were diverse.

Abu-Lughod (1963) argued that in the early 19th century the main sources of knowledge about the West for a literate public were probably the travel accounts of Egyptian students and the translations they made of European scientific, technical and literary works.17 Direct contacts with the growing number of Europeans living in the Middle East during the early period were, in his opinion, less important. In the case of Egypt, it was part of the educational policy of Muhammad 'Ali to send student missions to Europe, mainly France. These students did not only have to fill the need for teachers with an appropriate scientific background, they also had to translate manuals from European languages into Arabic in order to meet the lack of good Arabic teaching materials. Apart from qualified students, both skilled teachers and manuals were indeed badly needed in the modern secular state schools Muhammad 'Ali was founding in Egypt. The students who were sent abroad did not only translate military, scientific and technical books, however; they also translated literary, historical and political works.18

Together with the accounts which some of the students and other travelers wrote, printed on the governmental presses at Bulaq from the 1820s on, these translated works, based on original European sources, formed the main basis for the early transmission of knowledge from and about Europe. By means of these books, the nineteenth-century Arab reader was able to learn not only about 'the political, economic and natural geography of the world,' but also about the historical developments of European society and politics, as well as European manners and customs and European literature. (Abu-Lughod, 1963: 54-55)

Although in the beginning of the 19th century travelers to Europe were mainly Egyptians, their translations and original books, as well as other Arabic publications, were distributed and read in various centers in Syria and Lebanon during the Egyptian occupation of Syria. Tibawi (1969) mentions that the reading public of these 'books on science, mathematics, medicine, theology, mysticism, language, history, geography and travel' consisted of 'civil servants, physicians, chemists and army officers,' as well as 'religious functionaries, members of

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17 For an overview of the historical development of the modern translation movement, see Abu-Lughod (1963: 28-45).

18 For a more detailed discussion of the translated materials, which includes a concise list of translated works, see Abu-Lughod (1963: 46-65)
consultative councils, notables, teachers and private individuals of all communities, Muslims, Christians and others." (Tibawi, 1969: 88)\(^9\)

**Translation in Lebanon**

Towards the end of the 19th century, Arab intellectuals from countries other than Egypt, mainly Lebanon, also started translating European works into Arabic. These translations, in contrast to the Egyptian ones which were a government enterprise, were mainly the product of private initiative. Among the translated works were also European studies of Arab and Islamic history and culture and the self-image of some Arab intellectuals became influenced by Orientalist concepts.\(^{20}\) Many early sociological works were translated into Arabic almost immediately upon publication translated into Arabic.

**Implications for the debate**

Some of the linguistic opinions articulated in the *fuṣḥā-ʿāmmiyah* debate were clearly influenced by Orientalist linguistic studies as well as by some European sociological theories. This idea will be further developed in the course of the analysis.

Another translation activity in Lebanon to which attention has to be drawn because of its implications for the debate, was the translation of the Gospels undertaken earlier in the century by two Protestant missionaries in Lebanon, Eli Smith (1801-1857) and Cornelius Van Dyck (1818-1895). They were assisted by three local scholars *Nāṣīf Al-Yāızī* (1800-1871), a Greek Catholic, *Buṭrus al-Bustānī*\(^{21}\) (1819-1883), a Protestant of Maronite descent, and *Yūsuf al-Asīr* (1815-1889), a Muslim.

Several scholars on the development of nationalism in Europe have asserted the role of Protestantism in paving the way. They have argued that following the Protestant tradition of non-mediation, every believer must be his own

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\(^9\) Tibawi (1969) based his assertion on lists of books printed in Cairo and provided in various Lebanese and Syrian places that were preserved in the Egyptian archives. Tibawi uses this information also to downplay the role of the Catholic and Protestant missionaries as pioneers in the printing and circulation of scientific and literary works in Arabic. The missionary presses started printing secular works only in the second half of the 19th century.

\(^{20}\) Abu-Lughod (1963) argued that the translation of Orientalist studies was a result of the general respect Arab intellectuals had for Western scholarship, which was itself one of the results of the translation movement. (Abu-Lughod, 1963: 63) For a discussion of Orientalist studies translated into Arabic and their impact on social thought in Egypt, see Mitchell (1988: 122-5, 138-140).

\(^{21}\) Moreover it was Al-Bustānī who had taught Van Dyck Arabic. (Tibawi, 1966: 265).
priest. Thus he has to be able to read and understand the religious sources (and first of all, the Bible), and preferably in his own language. In order to achieve this the Bible had to be translated into the vernacular, which is thereby elevated to a literary language.

Gellner assesses the role of Protestantism as follows:

'Thus Protestantism achieves, for its own religious ends, that transformation of a peasant dialect into a 'real' language, codified and capable of transmitting messages in a context-free manner over distances and over a large anonymous population. That which, later, nationalism strove to do, and did, for overtly political ends, Protestantism practiced earlier, and at least initially, in a politically innocent way. Protestantism advances the social position of a vernacular, turning it into the medium of a high culture, in order to advance a faith. In so doing, it helps prepare the ground for the emergence of a nation, which may or may not remain linked to that faith, loyal to it, and defined in part in terms of adherence to it. Nationalism, by contrast, pushes a vernacular in the direction of a high culture, and may avail itself of the help of a faith, which may have already done a good deal to further literary codification, and whose personnel may be eager to help in the process of mixed religious and national missionary work.' (Gellner, 1997: 76-7) [emphasis original]

Smith and Van Dyck, however, did not hold to their initial intention to translate the Bible 'in the best modern form of spoken Arabic,' but tried to find a compromise and 'attempted to remain true to the classical Arabic usage, but also to use only that part of the old language which is understood by the unlearned' (Thompson, 1956: 20-7, via Salibi, 1965: 143-4). Their Arabic version of the Bible, published in 1865, is said to have been very much appreciated locally because it was considered to be 'so pure, so clear and so classical, as to be acceptable to all classes and sects' (Thompson, 1956: 20-7, via Salibi, 1965: 143-4). The sources do not mention why Van Dyck and Smith changed their minds. However, their eventual choice comes very close to the dominant opinion in the linguistic debate during the 19th century (namely that the spoken language cannot be used as a written language, and that a simplified form of classical Arabic would serve the purposes better; see Chapter 4 and onwards). Can we assume that Van Dyck and Smith were influenced by the opinions of their native assistants (Naṣīf Aḥmad, Būṣrā al-Bustānī, Yūsuf Aḥmad)? The least we can say is that the eventual translation strengthened this opinion, because somehow it puts it into practice. We can also wonder what might have happened if Van Dyck and Smith had held on to their original opinion and had translated the Bible 'in the best modern form of spoken Arabic.' But they did not and thus they did not cause a 'vernacular revolution,' comparable to the ones that were caused by Protestants in Europe.
Other linguistic consequences and manifestations in the debate

The translation movement started under Muhammad ‘Ali also had serious consequences for the Arabic language as new concepts and ideas were introduced into the Arab world. The translators confronted serious problems finding the right terminology for the scientific and political concepts they encountered in the works they were translating. This eventually led to the question of the modernization of Arabic, and more specifically, the need for lexical expansion and questions concerning the principles according to which this had to be achieved. The options for lexical expansion varied from the semantic extension of existing words, compounding, and the arabicization of foreign words to adopting foreign loans without changing them. Which device should be given priority was (and still is) heavily debated. We will pay attention to this linguistic debate only insofar as it intersects and influences the fushā-‘āmmiyah debate.

Another linguistic consequence was the impact of translation on Arabic prose style. Since many stylistic devices that were current at the time in Arabic composition were not used in European works, it was hard to use them in their Arabic translations. Probably, this, together with the development of a new journalistic style, to which we will return in the discussion of the printing press, played a role in the gradual disappearance of rhyming prose (saği') in texts as well as titles. (Abu-Lughod, 1963: 64)²²

Yet another novelty introduced by translation was the use of punctuation marks, which were non-existent in Arabic before.

These stylistic transitions also appear in the newspaper articles I analyzed. Even though some authors were still seduced into the use of rhyming prose, there is a general tendency toward the simplification of language use in which the content is more important than the stylistic artifice. The articles are organized in paragraphs, and even though the majority of sentences tend to be long and complex, punctuation marks are generally used.

From the analysis of our data it will appear that many of the participants in the fushā-‘āmmiyah debate explicitly or implicitly relate modernization to Westernization. The debate was at least in part triggered by the observation of general scientific and social progress in the West, progress that was felt to be lacking in the Middle East. The authors try to make an analysis of the causes of the apparent inferiority of the Middle East, and one of the causes which is singled out

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²² For an analysis of the evolution of the Arabic vocabulary of political concepts since the 19th century, see Ayalon (1987).

²³ In his discussion ‘The impact of translations on Arab intellectual development’ Abu-Lughod (1963) mentions not only the expansion of concrete Western knowledge, but also the positive impact of translation on the scientific reputation of Western scholars among Arabs and on Arab methodology (Abu-Lughod, 1963: 62-4).
is the difference between the spoken and the written language. This observation leads to several comparisons between the Arabic linguistic situation and the linguistic situations in European countries, mainly France and Britain. On the other hand parallels are also seen between the position of Classical Greek or Latin and *fusha* Arabic, and between the position of Modern Greek or the modern Romance languages and the spoken varieties of Arabic. Such comparisons could only be made on the basis of some knowledge of Western society and languages.

Also the ways in which the political and nationalist views which are (often implicitly) expressed in the debate demonstrate sometimes that the author is clearly acquainted with the political situation in Europe. Ample evidence of this will be provided in the actual analysis of the debate.
EDUCATION

Traditional education
In Egypt, as well as in the Levant, education was originally the responsibility of the religious communities. Generally, education was almost exclusively an urban phenomenon. In rural areas children learned professions from their parents. However, a certain geographic and social mobility seems to have been possible.

Islamic education was quite similar in all regions of the Arab world. Children of Muslims could get an elementary education, consisting mainly of reading and writing, memorization of the Koran, practical religious education (such as ablutions and prayer), some poetry and the basics of arithmetic in the kuttab or Koranic schools. Beyond the elementary level one could go to the various types of colleges: the madrasah (college of law), masjid (mosque college) and the masjad (shrine college). These institutions were open to all students (rich and poor) and formed to a certain extent a channel for social mobility. One could also attend the lectures of scholars in a mosque, one could join one of the circles (halqah), and one could go into apprenticeship with a learned man. (Szylowiak, 1973: 51-90)

Educational developments in Egypt under Muhammad 'Ali:
The development of modern secular state education
As we suggested above, the first large-scale modern translation movement was initiated by Muhammad 'Ali in order to fill two important gaps in the modern educational system he was trying to set up, namely the lack of qualified teachers and teaching materials.

Even though Muhammad 'Ali's educational measures were utilitarian (he needed skilled personnel, soldiers as well as logistic support, and he aimed at only a small percentage of the population), he laid the basis for modern secular state education. In 1809 he sent the first mission of Egyptian students to Europe (see above) and in 1816 the first modern school was opened. The main subjects that were taught there were the Koran, reading and writing, foreign languages (among which Turkish, Persian, Italian) and military subjects. Between 1827 and 1834 'a medical school, a school of pharmacy, one of veterinary medicine, an engineering school, a signal school, and even a school of music to train buglers and trumpeters' for the training of personnel for the auxiliary forces, and 'a school for accounting (1826), [a] civil school (1829), and a school of administration' for the training of loyal administrative personnel, were established. (Szylowiak, 1973: 102-103)

However, all these schools were schools for higher education and one of the problems Muhammad 'Ali faced was to find enough qualified students who

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24 These were discussion groups that met with a scholar in a mosque.
could immediately benefit from the education provided in these schools. 'Graduates' from the traditional kuttâb and madârisah were seldom well prepared. In order to tackle this problem Muhammad ‘Ali founded several preparatory and elementary schools. However, we should not forget that Muhammad ‘Ali was not interested in providing general education for the masses. His modernizing educational measures were limited to a small percentage of the population, which was mainly urban.

Apart from the lack of qualified teachers and students, one of the major problems was the absence of good teaching materials in Arabic. As we already mentioned, the students who were sent on educational missions to Europe had as one of their assignments the translating of the books they were studying in Europe into Arabic. However, few of them were qualified translators and since their workload was enormous, translation went very slowly and was not always of high quality. To tackle this problem, a school of translation was opened in Cairo in 1835. The school also contained a translation office, where it is estimated that, between its foundation and the end of Muhammad ‘Ali's reign, more than 2,000 books were translated²⁵ (Szyliowicz, 1973: 105).

We can summarize with Szyliowicz that the educational system as it was developed by Muhammad ‘Ali was characterized by its extreme centralization, its orientation to the education of officers and bureaucrats for governmental service, its elitism (since the number of students was kept consciously limited), and the duality between modern and traditional education. (Szyliowicz, 1973: 107-8)

Toward the end of the reign of Muhammad ‘Ali, educational developments stagnated²⁶ and this stagnation continued until the reign of Ismâ‘îl (r. 1863-1879) whose educational policy was mainly focused on the building up of an educational structure, as well as aggressive modernization and Westernization. The observation that modernization and Westernization often coincided certainly applies to the educational developments in Egypt under Ismâ‘îl. During his reign the number of Europeans living in Egypt increased from 10,000 before 1848, to 33,000 in 1863 and 80,000 in 1865. Subsequently, the number of foreign missionary and non-denominational schools increased as well, outnumbering drastically the Egyptian

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²⁵ Also Abu-Lughod (1963) mentions this number of translated works between 1835 and 1848. He also states that the exact number of translations cannot be checked, but that undoubtedly the production was enormously high.

²⁶ I mentioned already that this stagnation was mainly due to the limitation imposed on Muhammad ‘Ali’s army. Since education was strongly interrelated with the development of a strong army, the limitations influenced educational developments, as well as the general modernization process. (See also footnote 13).
governmental schools. These foreign schools not only provided education for the children of expatriate Europeans, but also for a growing number of Egyptians.

Western influence was also strongly felt in Isma‘il’s educational policy, which was focused on a total reorganization and restructuring, in accordance with the law of 7 November 1867, itself explicitly based on Western models and especially on the Lancaster school in England and the Egyptian school in Paris. Moreover, the Ministers of Education, who were responsible for the concrete design of this policy and its implementation, such as ‘Ali Mubarak and Ibrāhīm Adham, were themselves educated in Europe.

Mitchell (1988) has indicated that the Egyptian educational policy at the end of the 19th century did not coincide by accident with measures to control agricultural production by containing peasants to their villages, the construction of so-called ‘model villages,’ and the restructuring of towns and cities. This was seen as the expression and achievement of an intellectual orderliness, a social tidiness, a physical cleanliness, that was coming to be considered the country’s fundamental requirement. The new order of the army and the model village was to be extended to include the city and the civilian. In this process came into being the politics of the modern state.’ (Mitchell, 1988: 63) ‘The new schooling introduced earlier in the century under Muhammad ‘Ali had been intended to produce an army and the particular technicians associated with it; schooling was now to produce the individual citizen.’ (Mitchell, 1988: 69)

Consequences
Since the majority of the students who attended the modern Egyptian governamental schools spoke and understood only Arabic, the teaching language in the schools other than the military ones was consequently Arabic. This is probably also the reason why the translation movement was mainly one into Arabic and not into Turkish. This did not only have serious implications for the Arabic language itself, in terms of its wider use and the need for modern scientific and political terminology. Another important consequence was the fact that the new educational

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27 Szyliowicz (1973) mentions that while there were 59 foreign-sponsored schools in 1863, in 1878 this number had increased to 146, with a total number of 12,539 students, including 1,139 Muslims. In 1878 there were only 30 government primary schools.

28 The Circassian and Turkish elite had no interest in sending their children to schools other than those that provided a military education. (Szyliowicz, 1973: 106). See also Heyworth-Dunne (1968: 125). This is also illustrated by the fact that during the reign of Muhammad Ali almost all the military works were published in Turkish, while most books on modern technology were published in Arabic (Verdery, 1971: 131).

29 Often Arabic was only indirectly the teaching language since most French and Italian teachers taught in their native languages, translation into Arabic being provided.
The broad context of historical developments

system produced Arabic-speaking graduates who gradually became more important in the army and in the bureaucracy. This development was one of the main causes for the shifts in the Egyptian political elite during the 19th century and for the replacement of Turkish by Arabic as the only language of official correspondence in 1858 (Szyliowicz, 1973: 110).

Education in Egypt under British occupation 1882-1914

Since one of the main factors that caused the British occupation of Egypt was the financial deficit caused by Isma'il's expensive modernization policy, the British tried to cut back as many government expenses as possible. Education was one of the domains that suffered most under the economic measures. Many primary and secondary schools were abolished. The modernization of education further stagnated during the British colonial rule, not only for financial reasons, but also because 'Cromer and other British officials believed that the introduction of elaborate, literary Western-type education as in India, would result in the creation of a Westernized political elite, a leadership for nationalist agitation that would be critical of British rule.' (Tignor, 1966: 320)

While the British perpetuated some tendencies already present in the Egyptian educational system, they radically broke with others. The strong relation between a primary or secondary certificate from the state schools and a position in the bureaucracy was kept intact and even strengthened since the number of students was consciously limited, as well as the duality that existed between traditional religious and modern governmental education. Even though the modern primary and secondary schools under Muhammad 'Ali opened some opportunities for others than the traditional elites, and students in these schools were financed by the state, they still had an elitist character because of the fact that only a limited number of students was allowed. The elitist character was reinforced under British rule since they not only abolished student financing, but also started to ask tuition fees. As a result, only the children of those who could afford it could attend these schools and as a result only members of the upper classes could obtain administrative posts.

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31 Until 1912, the budget for education never exceeded 3.4% of the total national budget (Tignor, 1966).

32 The only schools that remained were the training school for teachers, the military and police school, the School of Law, the School of Medicine and the School for Engineering. All other schools closed down (Tignor, 1966: 322).

33 The reasons for applying the tuition system were diverse. First of all, there was of course the budgetary deficit and the fact that the government used the money of the tuition fees to pay for the elementary schools in the villages, the technical schools and the teacher training schools. (These
On the other hand, where Muhammad ‘Ali neglected elementary education, the British, when more money became available, invested mainly in elementary education for the masses, technical schools and teacher training schools.

However, for our purposes British language policy in education is the most important factor. Apart from the fact that the British tried to replace French as the main foreign language, they also tried to replace Arabic as the general medium of instruction. In 1900, English replaced Arabic as a teaching language for a large number of subjects in the primary schools, while in the secondary schools all subjects but Arabic and mathematics were taught in English. This measure was soon reversed since it stirred a lot of reaction among Egyptian nationalists. (Tignor, 1966: 326-7)

Implications for the fushā-‘āmmīyah debate
The importance of English and other foreign languages and the related fear that Arabic might be replaced by one of them is in fact something that is discussed in the debate that concerns us here. We will notice that fear for the replacement of Arabic by a foreign language is an argument that often recurs in the fushā-‘āmmīyah debate, though it is used for different purposes. Usually it is adduced to sustain a general opinion in favor of the modernization of Arabic. On the other hand, it is also used to support both the replacement of the so-called ‘spoken language’ by the ‘written language,’ as well as the opposite. In the first line of thought, the ‘weakness’ of the spoken language is stressed. If the written language is further strengthened by making everybody speak it, it will be strong enough to defy the foreign languages. Following the opposite argumentation, the spoken language is considered to be the lively and strong one. Supporters of this view argue that if the spoken language replaces the written language, which they consider ossified, Arabic will be strong enough to defy foreign languages. Only a very small minority shared the dominant British opinion that Arabic did not qualify as a scientific language, lacked the necessary vocabulary, and would therefore be better replaced by English or French. (We will also return to this point in the analysis of the debate in Chapter 8.)

Even more important for our purposes was the fact that the British favored the use of the vernacular for elementary education. Even though this preference was voiced in Cromer’s Annual Report for 1902 (Tignor, 1966: 322), it is not clear to what extent it was actually implemented.

schools were far less popular than the primary and secondary schools and therefore no tuition fees could be asked.) The British also wanted to limit the number of students. Furthermore, there was the idea that education was not really the responsibility of the government (as part of a more general liberal philosophy) and that if the upper classes had to pay for education, education would become more highly valued (Tignor, 1966: 325).
Western Orientalists had already been studying Arabic dialects already much earlier, but they started to participate actively in the *fuṣḥā‘-‘āmmīyah* debate in the Egyptian press during the same period. Scholars such as Willcocks, Willmore, Vollers and Spitta heavily pleaded for the use of Egyptian vernacular as a literary language. Spitta (1880) and Vollers (1890) restricted themselves to studying the lexicon and grammatical rules of the Egyptian vernacular, however, stressing the fact that the difference between Egyptian and *fuṣḥā‘* is a profound one and that *fuṣḥā‘* is a difficult and rigid language, comparable to Latin. They both registered the Egyptian vernacular in Latin script.

Willcocks (1893) wrote an article in which he explained why the Egyptians had not the creativity to make inventions: the main reason was, according to him, the fact that they wrote in a language, namely *fuṣḥā‘*, which was not their mother tongue. If they would instead write in their ‘real’ mother tongue, the Egyptian vernacular, they would give their creativity a real chance. He put his opinions into practice with the translation of several works of Shakespeare and extracts from the Gospel, and he also wrote a book in Egyptian Arabic, titled ‘Food and belief.’ His articles and translations were published in an Egyptian magazine, *Al-‘Azhār*, of which he was the editor for a while. In another article he claimed that the language spoken in Syria, Egypt and North Africa was Punic rather than Arabic (Willcocks, 1926).

Also Wilmore (1901) complained about the difficulty of *fuṣḥā‘* and considered this the main reason for the high illiteracy rate in Egypt. If the Cairene vernacular, which he considered a new language, structurally different from *fuṣḥā‘*, could replace *fuṣḥā‘* as a literary language, it would be a solution for the illiteracy problem. Cairene could be introduced in two steps: first newspapers should be published in Cairene, with the support of influential people in Egyptian society, and then, in case of success, compulsory education in Cairene should be provided. He called on the Egyptian government and the British to recognize Cairene officially. If this plan succeeded, the Egyptians would be literate within two years, which would guarantee the general progress of the Egyptian people. Eventually, this proposal would have to be spread all over the Arab world.

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35 This was originally a lecture which Willcocks gave in the ‘Azbakīyah-club in Cairo in 1893.

36 ‘Syria, Egypt, North Africa en Malta speak Punic, not Arabic’ published in 1926.

37 In ‘The spoken Arabic of Egypt: grammar, exercises, vocabularies’, published in 1901 in English. The book was reprinted in 1905. Another publication of his hand his ‘Handbook of spoken Arabic of Egypt, comprising a short grammar and an English Arabic vocabulary,’ published in 1927.
In Syria and Lebanon, as far as I know, no Westerners put forward similar proposals.

As we will see, the position in favor of the standardization of the ‘spoken language’ was from the beginning of the debate a minority position among Arab intellectuals and it triggered a lot of reaction. From the moment that some British writers start to participate in the debate, the reactions become even more fierce, since their ‘defense of the folk language’ was, and often still is, perceived as an imperialist device to destroy the Arabic language and have it replaced by English (or another European language). Furthermore, since – as we will also see – for many Arab nationalists, Arabic is the link par excellence between the Arabs, any attack on Arabic is considered an attack on Arab nationalism.

Since many of the British actually considered Arabic as a pre-scientific language, and since it was at least for some time part of British educational policy to replace Arabic by English in primary and secondary education, these accusations seem not completely unwarranted. This does not necessarily mean, however, that all Orientalists who studied Egyptian and other Arabic dialects participated in an imperialist conspiracy against Arabic and Arab nationalism. Neither do we have to consider the Arab intellectuals who were in favor of the ‘spoken language’ as naive string puppets of the British, at best, or as supporters of imperialism, at worse, as they were depicted at the time and afterwards by some authors.38

However, we have to be aware of the colonial context, the actual British language policy during the colonial period, British participation in the debate in Egypt and the reactions it triggered during and after this period, and of the perception that imperialist motives were behind the British position in the debate. (These issues will be further discussed in Chapter 8.)

Educational developments in Syria and Lebanon
Since education was originally the responsibility of the religious communities, Christians and Jews provided for their own schools, which – as was the case for Muslims – offered a basically religious education. In Lebanon, where the Christian community was the largest, elementary education was often provided by teachers who opened village schools upon returning from Rome after completing their own education there. Some of these schools were under Jesuit administration. Beyond the elementary level, at least two monastic colleges for higher education existed for Uniate Christians (Maronite-Greek Catholic), one in ‘Ayn Waraqah (Maronite) and another in ‘Ayn Ṭrāz (Greek-Catholic) (Salibi, 1965: 124-5). However, these early educational opportunities were mainly limited to the Maronite and the Greek

38 For an outspoken analysis of and opinion on the debate, see ‘Tārīḥ al-da’waḥ ʿilā al-ʿammīyah wa ṣāḥīḥa fī Misr’ written by Naṣīrah Zakariyya Saʿīd and published in Cairo in 1964.
Catholic community and remained very modest. In the beginning of the 19th century, the need to establish more schools was felt and at least five Maronite monasteries, and also one Greek Orthodox one, were converted into schools (Salibi, 1965: 126).

The Muslim community in the coastal towns Sidon, Beirut and Tripoli had its own kuttābs and madārisah (pl. of madrasah), where the education was similar to that provided in other Islamic institutions in the rest of the Middle East. Of all the religious communities in Lebanon the rural Druze and Greek Orthodox are said to have had the least access to education during the 19th century (Salibi, 1965: 126).

Missionary activities
Since the number of Christians was much larger in Lebanon than in other parts of the Middle East the impact of missionary education was much larger there. In rural areas the missionary schools often provided the only educational opportunity, since modern state education was mainly an urban phenomenon. This was yet another cause for the impact of missionaries on education in Mount Lebanon.

Missionaries started to develop their activities in Lebanon as early as the 12th century. Though they established a few schools, however, the Roman Catholic missionaries did not seriously devote themselves to education until the 19th century.

Missionaries became influential only in the 19th century and particularly during and after the Egyptian occupation of Lebanon. Ibrāhīm, who occupied the Levant on behalf of his father, Muḥammad ʿAlt, allowed missionaries to move more extensively within the country – where traveling had become much safer – and to open schools.

Even though the French and American missionaries were originally only interested in providing an ecclesiastical and evangelical education, they had – in order not to lose their influence in the local communities – to give in to local demands for secular education. (Makdisi, 2000: 90) By doing so, they made an important contribution to the development of modern education in Lebanon. Especially the rivalry between the Jesuits and the American Protestant missionaries

30 For a short discussion of education in Lebanon before the 19th century, see Salibi (1965: 123-7). Khalaf (1979) mentions ʿĀyn Tūrah (*1734) and ʿĀyn Waraqah (*1789) as the two most important schools in Mount Lebanon before the 19th century. Both schools were opened by graduates from the Maronite College in Rome. He also mentions that all politically or culturally prominent figures and employees in the administration in nineteenth-century Lebanon were educated in these schools (Khalaf, 1979: 40-1).

40 Missionaries were initially not allowed to develop proselytizing activities, especially not among the Muslim populations of the Ottoman Empire, as they were not allowed to teach Muslims. As a consequence they initially devoted their attention to the Christian communities.
who arrived in Beirut in 1823 was fruitful for the creation of educational opportunities, since they tried to exceed each other in the opening of educational institutions on all levels. So when in 1866 the Protestants founded the Syrian Protestant College (SPC) in Beirut, which later became the American University of Beirut, the Jesuits did not hesitate to develop the seminary they had founded in Gazr in 1848 into the University of St Joseph in 1874. In addition, they opened several schools for elementary and secondary education. 41

Between the 1860s and 1917, the Russians also started to develop educational activities, mainly directed toward the Orthodox community. Even though Russian schools were mainly established in Palestine, their impact was felt in the rest of Syria. In these schools the study of Arabic was stressed 42, and as a result, ‘an Orthodox Melkite passing through a Russian school emerged with his Arabic strengthened and his growing Syrian-Arabic awareness in no way damaged.’ (Haddad, 1970: 85) 43

**Implications for the debate**

For our purposes the foundation of both universities is important since many Lebanese intellectuals who participated in the fushā-'ammiyyah debate were educated either at the Catholic or the Protestant University. One of the most important cultural periodicals at the time and the main forum of the debate, Al-Muqatāf, was founded by two former students of the SPC, Fāris Nimr and Ya'qūb Sarrāf, at the incitement of the Protestant missionaries Eli Smith and Cornelius Van Dyck, and was printed on the university presses.

The two institutions, however, had a different approach: ‘St Joseph always emphasized religious training and attachment to French culture. The Syrian Protestant College, on the other hand, viewed Protestantism not as an end in itself but as a means of improving the life of its graduates and came to define religion in very liberal terms. These differences were reflected in the actual functioning of the institutions, the French one emphasizing traditional ideas, the American proving far more innovative and receptive to concepts with radical implications.’ (Szyliowicz,

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41 The rivalry between Catholic and Protestant missionaries also had a negative impact in Mount Lebanon since it contributed to ‘sectarianizing the landscape of Mount Lebanon.’ Jesuits focused their efforts mostly on the Maronite community and other Catholics, who were mainly concentrated in the Kisrawan region while Protestants directed their attention to the Druze community who lived mainly in the Shuf (Makdsi, 2000: 90-1).

42 Haddad (1979) mentions that this was mainly because the Orthodox tradition prescribes, just like the Protestants, that the liturgy be conducted in the native language. (Haddad, 1970: 85)

43 Also Tibawi (1961) confirms that ‘the Russian schools were acquainting the native students with the treasures of Arabic literature’ and that many of the important Arab Palestinian writers and journalists in the early twentieth century were educated at Russian schools (Tibawi, 1961: 176-7).
1973: 119) However, the liberalism and openness of the SPC toward radical ideas should not be overemphasized. Liberal and conservative members of the staff conducted hot discussions about, among other things, the abolition of Arabic as a language of instruction and Darwinism. Student strikes notwithstanding, the conservative side came out on top. Radical ideas such as Darwinism were not accepted, as witnessed by the expulsion of Fāris Nimr and Ya'qāb Sarrūf as a result of their enthusiasm for the theory of evolution and in 1883 English was made the sole language of instruction⁴⁴ (Philipp, 1990: 3-5). (See also: Philipp, 1979: 18-20; Farag, 1972; Tibawi, 1966.)

Thus in the end the SPC remained, despite liberal staff members, a religious institution, where students had to attend daily services and no accommodations were made for Muslims and Jewish students (Szyliowicz, 1973: 120). Teachers were tested on their religiosity and had to sign a manifesto, the so-called Declaration of Principles, which implied that the undersigned declared his support for Protestant religious dogma and denounced all aspects of the theory of evolution (Philipp, 1979: 20, 56; Philipp, 1990: 4).

Private initiatives in modern education

The missionary activities in the field of education should not divert us from other important educational initiatives taken in Lebanon. In the second half of the 19th century several schools were opened at the private initiative of the Greek Orthodox community and the Sunnites of Beirut.⁴⁵ Butrus al-Bustānī opened his famous National School (al-madrasah al-watāfinyah) at his home in 1863.

Another important private school was the National Islamic School founded by Hūsain Al-Ḡisr (1845-1909) in Tripoli (Lebanon). The curriculum included Arabic, French, and Turkish, religious sciences, logic, mathematics and natural science. The teaching language was Arabic. The Arabic handbooks written by Van Dyck⁴⁶ were used for the scientific subjects (Hourani, 1962: 222-223).

Apparently, the Druze and Shi’ite communities developed no private educational initiatives.

⁴⁴ Before, in 1879-1880, English had been introduced in all branches but Medicine (Philipp, 1979: 18). See also Tibawi (1966).

⁴⁵ Among the Greek Orthodox schools a boys’ school, opened in the convent of Balamand (near Tripoli) in 1833, and a school in Sūq al-ḡarb, opened in 1852. The Sunnites opened several Maqāṣid schools which were financed by the Moslem Society of Benevolent Intentions (Ǧām‘iyat al-Maqāṣid al-Ḥayriyah al-Islāmiyah). Another school, Al-Madrasah al-ʿUmrānīyah was opened by Abūnāḥ ‘Abdāl-ʿAzhari in 1897 (Salibi, 1965: 139-40). See also Tibawi (1969: 196)

⁴⁶ For an overview of the Arabic handbooks produced by Van Dyck, see Tibawi (1966: 293).
State initiatives in modern education

The first state schools in Syria were founded by the Egyptians, who opened three boarding schools for the education of army officers (in Damascus, Aleppo, and Antioch). Apart from that, they are said to have left the educational situation unchanged. However, as we already mentioned, during the Egyptian occupation missionaries were allowed to expand their activities, which had the implications for education which we discussed above. (Tibawi, 1969: 87-8)

The Ottoman government in Istanbul started, from mid-century on, to establish modern schools that followed a Western model in Syria. These new schools were mainly meant, as was the case in Egypt, to produce adequate personnel for the army and the bureaucracy. In 1861, the first ruşdiyah-school, as the higher elementary Ottoman governmental schools were called47, was opened in Aleppo. Similar schools followed in Damascus, Tripoli, Beirut and Jerusalem (Tibawi, 1969: 134). The majority of the students in these schools were Muslims.

In the same period the first mutasarrif, Dāwūd Pasha, opened the first school for the Druzes, al-madrasah al- Dāwūdiyah.

What is more important for us is that in contrast to most non-governmental schools where Arabic was the main medium of instruction, the teaching languages in the Ottoman schools were mainly Turkish and French. The attention paid to the instruction of Arabic was very limited48 (Tibawi, 1969: 169).

As we will see in Chapter 8, in the Syrian magazine Al-Muqtabas much more attention is paid to the position of Arabic in comparison to the position of Turkish. This is a direct result of the fact that Syrians attending the government schools were more directly confronted with the dominance of Turkish than those students graduating from the missionary or other non-governmental schools.

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47 Lower elementary education was provided in the şubhāniyāh schools, higher elementary education in the ruşdiyāh schools, lower secondary education in the 'iddāyiyyah schools and higher secondary education in the ṣultāniyyah schools (Tibawi, 1969: 168-9).

48 Knowledge of Turkish was important since some of the graduates from the higher secondary schools traveled to Istanbul to complete their education, which was necessary in order to obtain a high post in the Ottoman army or bureaucracy. The most important high schools in Istanbul were the Mülkiye High School, which prepared students for civil service, the Harbiye High School, which provided a military education and the Imperial School of Medicine (Tibawi, 1969: 169).
PRINTING

Education and printing are two domains that are strongly interrelated: on the one hand large-scale education depends on the availability of cheap(er) books, and on the other hand the large-scale production of books, made possible by printing, is only useful if a market of educated readers can be reached. The coincidence of the expansion of education and printing, then, was not accidental.

Short historical overview

Even though the first Arabic press was already developed as early as 1514 and Arabic presses could be found in the Middle East in the beginning of the 18th century, it is not until the 19th century that Arabic presses were extensively used for the printing of secular texts, first by governments, and from mid-century on, by private persons as well. The first press with Arabic type, developed in 1514 in Fano (Italy), was mainly used by the Papal See for religious purposes such as the printing of prayer books and Arabic translations of the Gospels. In 1702 the first Arabic press was installed in Aleppo, and during the 18th century several convents possessed Arabic presses. The Greek Catholic monastery of Shweir installed one in 1733 and the Greek monastery of Beirut in 1751. These presses were, however, mainly used for the printing of Christian ecclesiastical literature. (Salibi, 1965: 127-8)

In Istanbul religious and secular texts were printed from 1784 on, but only in Turkish, which was written in the Arabic script at the time.  

American and French missionaries also established their own printing presses in Lebanon. An American Protestant press was installed in 1834 and the French established a Catholic press in 1848. Before the 1860s, also these presses were mainly used for the printing of Bible translations and other religious texts.

As was the case for education, missionary activities should not divert our attention away from important private initiatives. Tibawi (1969) mentions that before that, in the 1850s, a wide range of publications, including 'school books, trade and official circulars, literary works and newspapers were already printed on 'secular' presses run by native Syrians' (Tibawi, 1969: 141). The first printing press in Egypt was introduced by the team of scholars that escorted Napoleon when he invaded Egypt in 1798, but they took it back with

49 For brief discussions of the development of printing in Syria and Lebanon, see Tibawi (1969: 141-4) and Salibi (1965: 127-8).

50 Originally, there was a ban on the printing of Arabic characters since the Arabic script was considered sacrosanct. In 1784, after having been lifted in 1727 and reinstalled in 1747, the ban was permanently abolished (Salibi, 1965: 127).
them to France in 1801. In 1820 Muḥammad ‘Alī established the first governmental printing press in Bulāq near Cairo and, as we mentioned above, initially used the available printing capacities mainly for utilitarian reasons, such as the printing of translated manuals.\(^{51}\) Only in the 1850s and under the auspices of Rifā‘ah Al-Ṭahštawi important classical Arabic works by Al-Maqārizī, Al-Iṣfahānī, Al-Ḥarīrī and Ibn Ḥaldis were also printed. (Verdery, 1971: 132) As a result, the Arabic literary heritage became available for a much larger reading public since these printed books circulated not only in Egypt, but also in Syria and Lebanon. This would gradually create a new sense of Arab history among these readers.

**The development of journalism**

The extension of the printing capacities led eventually to the development of the profession of journalism.\(^{52}\) Beirut, Istanbul and Cairo were to become its most important nineteenth-century centers.

The first newspapers to be published were governmental publications meant for the circulation of official information. Muḥammad ‘Alī was the first to publish an official gazette in the 1820s, Ġurnāl al-ḥāḍīth, which was in 1828 renamed Al-Waqa‘ī‘i-al-Miṣrīyah and which had an Arabic and a Turkish section. A similar initiative was taken in Lebanon by the first mutaṣṣarrif Dāwūd Pasha in the 1860s.

The earliest development of private journalistic enterprises probably took place in Lebanon, where private initiative preceded that of the government. In 1858 the first cultural periodical that treated topics ranging from science and commerce to history, ‘Hadiqat al-‘aḥbār’, was printed by Ḥādíl Al-Ḥārīrī on his privately owned press. Noteworthy is also Ahmad Fāris Al-Ṣidāq who started publishing Al-Ǧawābī‘b in the 1860s in Istanbul. These and other publications were also read in Egypt.

From the end of the 1860s many Syrians immigrated into Egypt, among them there were many journalists who continued their publishing activities there. This fact, together with the introduction of the telegraph into Egypt in 1866 and the

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\(^{51}\) For a short discussion of the publications printed on the Bulāq Press under Muḥammad ‘Alī, together with a discussion of the early sources, see Verdery (1971: 129-32). The subjects of the translated and original publications included a wide variety of ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ topics, such as ‘military and naval, medical, industry, mathematics and mechanics, engineering, geology, botany, geography, European history, ancient Egyptian history, natural history, veterinary, social, travel, history of philosophy, and agriculture’ and ‘Turkish history, calendars, interpretation of dreams, administration, traditional encyclopedias, language dictionaries, Arabic grammars, poetry, composition, biographies of the Prophet, religion, mysticism, pilgrimage ritual, morals, belles lettres, education, rhetoric, and religious law’ (Verdery, 1971: 130).

\(^{52}\) For a historical survey of the press in the Arab Middle East, see Ayalon (1995).
establishment of Reuters in Cairo, formed an important impetus for the development of private journalistic initiatives in Egypt, which from then on developed enormously\(^{53}\) (Ayalon, 1997b: 101-2).

As a result of these developments, Cairo emerged at the end of the 19th century as the most important center for the publication of Arabic language newspapers and periodicals in the Middle East. It is in these newly established publications that debates, in general, including the one that concerns us here, found their forum, or in Ayalon’s words:

‘Yet another area in which the press made a major contribution to the community was by constituting a platform for the discussion of issues of national identity and culture. Since the political aspect was integral in these issues, it was not only the literary monthly but also the daily and weekly political journals that dealt with them. The press opened its columns to thinkers and essayists, for whom newspapers—faster, cheaper, and simpler to produce than books—served as a preferred medium. These writers debated the issues of religion vs. secularism, Egyptian identity ("Pharaonism") vs. Arabism, territorial vs. pan-regional nationalism, and democracy vs. dictatorship, reacting to developments in other countries in the region and elsewhere and examining possible implications for their own society. The major newspapers played an important role in these debates, along with new journals that were founded during these years of intellectual ferment to meet the need for such a dialogue.’ (Ayalon, 1995:81)

**Linguistic consequences**

Arabic in its written form was influenced by the above-mentioned developments in printing and journalism. Speed and conciseness came to play a more important role than before and therefore the journalist had less time and space to write in an elaborate style. He was in need of a simple and direct language and older linguistic sources were broached for this purpose.

‘These linguistic sources—embellished adab, the more direct style of the chroniclers and geographers, and sometimes the spoken vernacular, along with the foreign example of journalistic language—formed the basis for a new style that was devised during the first, formative century of the Arabic press. Standards were gradually forged through trial and error to suit the pace, the format, and the other demands of...

\(^{53}\) Ayalon (1997b), who based his information on Tarāżī (1933 IV: 162-96, 274-302), reported that the production of Arabic newspapers in Egypt increased from 10 newspapers and periodicals before 1875 to 37 in the 1880s, to 210 in 1890s, to 303 at the beginning of the 20th century. (Ayalon, 1997: 100) In 1876 the Taqlā brothers founded Al-'Ahrām, which is until now one of the most important Egyptian newspapers. For other examples of famous periodicals and newspapers founded in Egypt between 1870 and 1914, see Ayalon (1997b: 102-104).
The broad context of historical developments

the medium. In the process, the press – more so than any other literary medium – contributed to the shaping of modern Arabic as a functional language, and the molding of literary norms that would facilitate the popularization of literature.' (Ayalon, 1995:174-5)
NATIONAL IDENTITIES

The developments discussed above, and in particular the evolutions in education and printing, all contributed in one way or another to the fact that at the end of the 19th century national identities were directly or indirectly questioned and discussed. Educated intellectuals with a growing political awareness emerged from the various modern schools, whether these were private Christian or Islamic schools, missionary schools or modern secular state schools. The bulk of these intellectuals also formed the reading public for not only an increasing number of printed books, but also a host of cultural, scientific and political journals and periodicals, in which the political and other events of the moment were discussed. Intellectuals, although a small minority in comparison to the vast illiterate urban and rural population, did not only become aware of each other through the medium of the printed word, but also of their historical (cultural and literary) heritage.

Benedict Anderson (1983, 2000) has discussed how the emergence of print-capitalism in Europe led to a 'vernacularizing revolution,' which led eventually to the end of the almost exclusive use of Latin as a written language and the development of several vernaculars into written standard languages. In the Arab world such a linguistic revolution did not take place.

Holt (1996) offers an explanation for this. He argues that Arabic had gone through a standardization process much earlier than most European languages and that this standardized form of Arabic, ِfuṣḥā, was preserved by a small minority of religious specialists, the "ulama". One of the consequences of stagnation in scientific progress in the Arab World was that Arabic did not have to be adapted to innovations and changes. The fact that the use of ِfuṣḥā was limited to a small group of specialists also

'helps to explain the remarkable homogeneity of the literate strata of the Muslim World and, when coupled with an ideological commitment to the Qur'ān as the last divinely-inspired revelation, also the continued survival and status of classical Arabic, even when the Arab World was ruled by Ottomans from a non-Arab capital. Interestingly when the Turks did finally try to impose their own language shortly before the collapse of their empire, it provoked the first stirrings of Arab nationalism.' (Holt, 1996: 14)

He further argues that in the Arab world no linguistic fracture lines similar to the ones in Europe between Romance, Germanic and Slavic languages existed since the spoken Arabic vernaculars were all linguistically related to ِfuṣḥā. Since Turkish was the administrative vernacular in the Arab provinces it could not provide a basis for popular literacy among the Arabic-speaking populations. Moreover, printing capacities were only in the 19th century seriously developed in the Arab world, which is rather late.
'In summary, by the turn of the century the Arab World had not developed the necessary combination of technological, socio-economic and conceptual factors for a widespread sense of national identity based on literacy on *fushā*. In other words not enough people read Arabic to imagine themselves as part of a wider community joined by print. But the potential was there because classical Arabic still served a powerful symbolic function, even when it was accessible to only a few.' (Holt, 1996: 16-7)

Just because of the limited number of literates even at the end of the 19th century, the newly established journals and periodicals had to cater for a reading public that was geographically widespread. As such, for instance, the Egyptian journalist wrote with a reading public in mind that was not limited to Egypt. Moreover, many of the pioneers in Arabic journalism were Syro-Lebanese Christians, who could rely on already existing Christian commercial networks. (As we have seen above, since the 17th century many Christians were involved in trade and as such they had established commercial connections throughout the Middle East.) Holt suggests that the combination of these factors (namely the fact that the literate market was very limited and the fact that these Lebanese journalists could benefit from the commercial networks that had been established since the 17th century) stimulated them to aim at an interregional market:

>'Their link with the trading network and the small size of the literate market suggested production for an interregional market. [...] The careers of many of the early political activists and men of letters show the absence of boundaries and the relative ease with which educated men could move from one urban center to another, taking with them their skills in the newly revived Arabic.' (Holt, 1996: 19)

Holt elaborates his argument by stating that the choice for an interregional market also had linguistic implications. It was not convenient for these early journalists to write in a local variety of Arabic, since this would limit the potential reading public to those persons who were familiar with that variety. This was one of the motives for them to choose for *fushā* as the medium for their articles. This choice was facilitated by the fact that *fushā* was also used in the domains of translation and modern education and that there was long tradition of literacy in it. On the other hand, their choice stimulated the spread of *fushā* among the new generations of literate Arabs.

>'What we have here, in sociolinguistic terms, is the opposite of a dialect continuum. Rather than having change radiate out slowly from fixed points and transmission through face-to-face interaction, the consciously revived and expanded variety we now call Modern Standard Arabic moved quickly along trade routes from city to city, through the new technology of print. The acceptance and popularity of these
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The Christian journalists had another reason to stimulate the use of *fuṣḥā*. They were a confessional minority in a pre-dominantly Islamic Ottoman Empire. In the context of the drastic changes that were taking place in the Ottoman Empire (secularization and modernization which were in part embodied by the *Tanzimat*, as well as its incumbent disintegration), some Christian intellectuals started to promote a new form of identity. This identity needed to transcend religious and confessional differences, and was based on a common language and history, instead of religion. In the process Muslims adhered to this new identity too.

'But as a counterelite which was itself a confessional minority, Christians were naturally drawn to promoting language over religion as the basis of national identity. [...] Muslim nationalists soon also subscribed to the belief that the Arab nation consists of those who speak Arabic as a mother-tongue or by adoption.' (Holt, 1996: 19)

Also Haddad (1970) has argued that the beginnings of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire formed an opportunity for these Christians to shake off their position of 'protected minority' (*diymf*) and to promote (an)other political order(s). However, according to him, the ideas they developed concerning this new political order tended to take quite different forms. He remarks that there are some substantial differences in the ways in which the idea of national identity developed within the Maronite and the Greek Orthodox communities respectively. He is convinced that the foundation for an Arab linguistic and cultural identity was basically laid constructed by Greek Orthodox Christians.

In the case of the Maronite Christians, a community that was basically settled in the area of Mount Lebanon, religious-sectarian identity strongly overlapped with the development of a distinctive Lebanese identity. This, in combination with their strong pro-French inclinations and French support, allowed the Maronites to develop a form of nationalism that had a religious-sectarian as well as a geographical basis, and which, because of the growing Maronite dominance in Lebanon, came later to be defined as Lebanese nationalism.

However, for most other Christians, there was no such religious-geographical match out of which a political-national identity could be developed. Most non-Maronite Christian communities were simply too small. The Greek Orthodox community, which was in principle large enough, was too scattered across the Middle East to be able to identify with a specific geographical area that was strictly Greek-Orthodox in the way the Maronites did.

Since the Greek Orthodox were so widespread in the Middle East (living mainly in the urban centres of Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt) with strong
commercial ties, (controlling a large part of the commerce between Syria and Egypt, in particular the maritime commerce between Sidon and Damietta) (Haddad, 1970: 40), in combination with historical factors and the fact that they were less susceptible to Western influence, they tended to identify themselves – as Haddad claims – with a larger geographical area, which coincided roughly with the Levant, than for instance the Maronites. The Greek Orthodox were of course aware of the fact that this was an area they shared with Muslims. As such, they had to find sources of solidarity other than religion, such as language, culture and history (Haddad, 1970), which was to become the basis for Arab nationalism.

Even if Haddad is much at pains to stress the role of Greek Orthodox Christians in the process of constructing a secular Arab identity, it is noteworthy that many of the staunch defenders of fiṣḥā in the first sub-debate in Al-Muqatatf (1881-1882) were indeed of Greek Orthodox or Greek Catholic descent (some of whom converted to Protestantism). I will further elaborate on this in Chapter 7.

Finally, I want to refer to the fact that although the discussion above strongly suggests that for most Arab writers and journalists, whether they were Muslim or Christian, fiṣḥā seemed the most obvious choice, it was not so for everybody. This is illustrated by the fact that some authors and journalists chose, for various reasons, to write and publish varieties of Arabic other than fiṣḥā. It is also illustrated by the fiṣḥā-'ammīyah debate which I will analyze in the following chapters.

The renewed use of written Arabic, which for centuries had been almost completely limited to religious and scientific discourse, in the modernized domains of society such as the administration and education and in completely new domains such as journalism obviously confronted writers of all kinds with serious practical

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54 At the moment of the Islamic conquests of Syria the Greek Orthodox community was, with the exception of those living in the Kura district, basically settled in the urban centers of Syria and Lebanon, such as Damascus, Aleppo, Tripoli, Sidon and Beirut. The Muslim Arab conquerors also settled mainly in the towns. The Greek Orthodox became acquainted with the Sunni Arab culture early on and they acquired many high administrative posts. They were probably also the first Christian community to adopt Arabic as their spoken vernacular and to use Arabic for their liturgy, in contrast with more rural settled Christians who followed later (Haddad, 1970: 20).

55 Haddad (1970) argues: ‘[W]hereas the Maronites were concentrated in the Lebanon; and the Uniate Melkites (their leadership particularly) were strongly represented, not only in Aleppo and Damascus but in precisely those areas enjoying widest autonomy and most susceptible to Western influence – that is, in Acre, Egypt, and the Mountain; the Orthodox Melkites retained their greatest strength in areas usually less autonomous and relatively unexposed to the European impact’ (Haddad, 1970: 66).

56 Among these writers the most famous in Egypt were Ya'qūb Şamūḥ ʿ and Ḥadīlāh Al-Nāḍīm.
problems and this could only lead to linguistic changes and, of course, discussions concerning these changes.

We already referred briefly to several linguistic problems and changes that were triggered by developments in other societal domains, such as the need for lexical innovation for all the new scientific, technical and political concepts the Arabs were confronted with and the need to develop a concise writing style for journalistic purposes. Scattered references can be found which refer to the 'poor quality' of the Arabic used in the bureaucracy and in some translations, by which most often grammatical mistakes and vernacular usage are meant.

In Europe, the early usage of vernaculars as administrative languages and in the printed media was mostly part of a slow, gradual and unconscious process (Anderson, 1983, 2000). When Arabic was used anew as a written and formal language during the 19th century, these developments took place at a much faster pace. Arab intellectuals were also increasingly aware of social and political developments in Europe, of which nationalism was one. This allowed for a certain consciousness of the potential of political and nationalist implications of linguistic choices.

Summary
Recapitulating the main arguments of this subsection, I want to indicate that at the end of the 19th century, the use of *fuṣḥā* increased drastically. This was due to developments in education, translation and journalism. The main underlying factors for the choice of *fuṣḥā* as the medium for the printed media were the following. First of all, due to the fact that literacy was not wide-spread, publishers of journals had to cater for an inter-regional market. This was enhanced by the fact that many nineteenth-century journalists were Syro-Lebanese Christians with commercial connections throughout the Middle East. As a result, the choice of writing in a regional or local variety was ruled out by the fact that this would impede to reach a geographically wide-spread and linguistically diverse reading public. Moreover, since there existed already a long tradition of literacy in *fuṣḥā* on which these journalists could draw *fuṣḥā* was the most obvious choice. Another underlying factor was the fact that Christians were a religious minority in the Ottoman Empire. Toward the end of the 19th century many Christian intellectuals started to promote an identity that transcended religious differences and that was given the secular basis of a common language, culture and history. These elements were to become the main constituents of Arab nationalism when it reached its full development after World War I.

So, whereas, print-capitalism in Europe stimulated the use of spoken vernaculars as written languages and their standardization into modern standard languages, which eventually replaced Latin as a written language, in the Arab world it led to the opposite. Print-capitalism did not stimulate the use of the spoken
vernaculars as written languages, on the contrary, it enhanced the use and spread of the classical language, namely *fushā*. Moreover, whereas this 'vernacularizing revolution' was an important factor in the development of nationalism(s) in Europe (Anderson, 2000 (1983)), *fushā* was to become one of the important symbols of a more encompassing Arab nationalism in the Arab world.
CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter we discussed some broad political and societal developments in some of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. These developments prepared the ground for the emergence of those elements that triggered the ʿfushā-ʿāmmīyah debate.

Towards the end of the 19th century, an articulate elite emerged that was politically and socially aware and that was mostly educated in Western-style modern schools. The political circumstances, an increasing Western influence, and the incipient disintegration of the Ottoman Empire provided a fertile soil for the early beginnings of a national awareness (which still could and actually did develop in many directions). A broad spectrum of privately owned political and cultural journals and periodicals provided the forum for the debates that were inevitably triggered by these changes and developments in nineteenth-century Middle Eastern society. The renewed use of Arabic in several new or modernized domains of society and the resulting linguistic problems and changes triggered linguistic debates of various kinds, such as the need for linguistic modernization and all its implications for lexicography and orthography. Among these debates was the debate concerning variability in Arabic, which was strongly interrelated with other linguistic debates, as well as the broader debates on modernization, Westernization and national identity, as I have already briefly suggested and as I hope to demonstrate in detail in the following chapters.
PART II
Chapter 3: The social anchoring of the debate

In this chapter I will discuss how the participants perceived and described cultural and social differences. As will appear, the participants used quite static cultural and social categories, such as the West (al-ğarb) and the Westerners (al-ğarbiyân), and the elite (al-ḫāṣṣah) and the common people (al-`āmmah). In the first section, I will analyze how the participants perceive and compare themselves with the West and Westerners. Social categories, such as elite (al-ḫāṣṣah) and common people (al-`āmmah) will be focused on in the second section.

THE WESTERN EXAMPLE (ASPECTS OF OCCIDENTALISM)

One of the striking elements in the opening article of the sub-debate in Al-Muqtaʿatâf is that the direct impetus for an investigation into the linguistic problem is provided by the observation that the Arabs comparatively lag behind 'the West.'

That the participants in the debate compared the Arab situation with the West need not come as a surprise. As explained in Chapter 2, contacts and interaction between the West and the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire had been increasing drastically during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Moreover, Al-Muqtaʿatâf was a journal that was published, with the support of the American missionary Cornelius Van Dyck, by Yaʿqûb Ĥarrâf and Fâris Nimr, who were graduates from and teachers at the SPC in Beirut.

Because of their educational background and their contacts with American missionaries, as well as the availability of a growing number of Arabic translations of European books, they and other members of the intellectual elite had had the opportunity to acquaint themselves with historical, social, cultural, scientific and political developments in Europe and America.

In this section I will pay attention to how 'the West' was conceptualized by the participants in the debate and how knowledge about and comparisons with the West are strategically developed into argumentation patterns in order to support a certain position in the debate.

I will deal with the following issues: How did the participants perceive ‘the West’ and ‘Westerners’? Which labels did they use to refer to the West and Westerners? What kinds of comparisons were drawn between Arab society and Western society, between Arabic and European languages? How accurate was the perception?
The general labels: Arabs versus Westerners, ‘we’ versus ‘them’

First of all, I have to draw attention to the fact that the debate is conducted in Arabic in a journal that was completely published in Arabic. As such, both the participants and their audience are people who read and write (or at least read) Arabic. This means that the participants wrote their articles and letters with a specific reading public in mind, which they in general conceived of as ‘we, the speakers of Arabic’ (naḥnu al-mutakallimūna bi-al-luḡah al-‘arabīyah) (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [2]), or generally ‘Arabs’ (a label which we will analyze in detail below.) So, they conceived themselves as well as their readers as basically constituting an Arab community, which they can refer to as ‘we.’

Accordingly, throughout the debate, Arabic is also presented as ‘our language’ (luḡatunā) or ‘our Arabic language’ (luḡatunā al-‘arabīyah), ‘our writing language’ (luḡat kitābatunā) and ‘our language of speech’ (luḡat takallumunā). Social categories are referred to in the same way, such as ‘our elite’ (ḥāṣṣatunā) and ‘our common people’ (‘ammatunā). Some authors also express their concern for ‘our complete success’ (naḡdunā al-tāmm) (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881 [2], Dāgir, 1882: 556 [2]). Other examples are ‘our language that we speak (luḡatunā alaīn natakallam bi-hā) (Al-Mumkin, 1881b: 621 [10]), ‘our common people’ (‘ammatunā), and ‘our elite’ (ḥāṣṣatunā) (Dāgir, 1882: 556 [2]).

As I will explain below, ‘we’ versus ‘them’ oppositions also appear with different meanings in other contexts, such as where literate Arabs are contrasted with illiterate ones. It also occurs that the debaters use ‘they’ in order to refer to Arabs who lived in the past. (See, for instance, Society (1882a: 552 [2])

The Arab community in general, and the linguistic and social categories are then compared to, or even contrasted with, similar categories of what is generally labeled ‘the West’ (al-ḡarb) or the ‘Westerners’ (al-ʿafraṅg – al-ḡarbyūn).

A Western commoner is then also referred to as ‘a commoner among them’ (al-ʿāmmī minhum) and compared to ‘a commoner among us’ (al-ʿāmmī minnā). Other similar references are ‘their commoners’ (ʿammatuhum), ‘their elite’ (ḥāṣṣauhum) (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 352-353 [1], [2]).

From this it appears that the West is usually conceived of as one community or nation (ʿummah) that is contrasted with the Arabs and occasionally with the East (al-ṣarq) or Easterners/Orientals (al-ṣarqīyūn) (Society, 1882a: 552 [1], Qandalāf, 1882a: 694 [2]).

Even though the most frequent references are made with the general labels ‘the West’ and ‘the Westerners,’ often more specific terms are also used such as ‘the Greeks’ (al-ʿarwān), ‘the Italians’ (al-ʿiṭālīyūn), which are also considered as community/nations (ʿumam). Thus, while on the one hand the West is seen as one community/nation, on the other hand Italians and Greeks, English and French are
also considered as separate communities/nations.\footnote{For a similar conclusions see Ayalon (1987).} For instance, the Damascene Literary Society refers to ‘the Westerners’ (al-\textit{garbīyūn}) and the Easterners (al-\textit{šarqīyūn}), as ‘the two \textit{ummah’s} (al-\textit{ummata}n). But on the same page reference is made to the French \textit{ummah} (al-\textit{ummah al-fāransāwīyāh}) (Society, 1882a: 552 [2]). In the same way, references are made to a general linguistic situation in the West, as well as specific Italian, Greek, English and French language situations.

From these examples it also appears that though the participants use the general labels ‘the West’ and ‘Westerners,’ which would technically also include America, they most often use these labels specifically with Europe and Europeans in mind.

\textit{The perception of Western superiority}

The general impression that is given about the West, and which most authors sustain explicitly, is one of general progress or success (\textit{nağāh}). This progress, however, appears to be mainly scientific. Though most authors seem to agree about Western scientific superiority, they put it in different perspectives, while some authors completely reject it.

For instance, \textit{Sarrūf} and \textit{Nimir} observe that the West is in general more successful than the Arabs, which is the reason for them to investigate the Arabic linguistic situation. This is how they open the debate. \textit{Al-Mumkin} goes as far as to state that the only valuable scientific works at the time were written in European languages and that they definitely surpassed scientific studies written in Arabic (\textit{Al-Mumkin}, 1882a: 495 [3]).

On the other hand, the Damascene Literary Society stresses the fact that a lot of the Western scientific knowledge is actually based on traditional Arab knowledge. The Damascene Literary Society also argues that a lot of the discoveries that were claimed by Westerners were actually made by Arabs.

‘They [the Arabs] also wrote [in Arabic] on the several sciences, crafts and arts, [so much] that it confuses the mind, despite the fact that a lot of it has gone with the wind and was scattered with the debris of storms. Despite their claim that they arrived at the highest top of the sciences, the Westerners still borrow from [these works], study what remains of them, spend a lot of money to purchase them and effort to copy them.’ (Society, 1882a: 552 [2])
In this way, the Damascene Literary Society tries to diminish the perceived Western superiority by stressing the value of the Arab scientific tradition and by stressing that Western scientific progress was actually based on Arab sciences.

The Damascene Literary Society also stresses the mental and linguistic superiority of the Arabs:

"Therefore their [the Arabs'] minds are the most superior minds and their language is the clearest language." (Society, 1882a: 552 [1])

The Damascene Literary Society further emphasizes that all modern knowledge is based on ancient knowledge and they seem convinced that modern Western knowledge does not essentially add anything new.

*Al-Mumkin* reacts to this in his second article by referring to the translation movement that took place in Egypt during the nineteenth century. He argues that the Egyptian government/state (dawlat misr) and its great scholars definitely acknowledged the value of Arabic and the Arabic scientific, industrial and agricultural works. Nevertheless they still found it necessary to spend a lot of money and energy on the translation of similar studies from French into Arabic. If all the necessary knowledge could be found in already existing Arabic books, they could have just printed these books and used them in their schools (*Al-Mumkin*, 1882b: 619-620 [7]).

Some authors also use references to Western books and sources in order to sustain their arguments or as 'good examples.' For instance, *Qandalaft* quotes Western books (*katub al-afrang*) as good examples of a good writing style (*Qandalaft*, 1882a: 695 [4]). *Al-Mumkin* also refers to 'the books of modern Western linguists' (*katub al-muhdaqtn min lugawî al-'afrang*) in order to sustain his argument that change is a characteristic of language and that

"[...] the Arabic language and all languages of the world adhere to changing, century after century, year after year, day after day, which is the case for almost everything on earth. This change is taking place in the Arabic language today, and was taking place before, and will continue to take place as long as the laws of being [continue to] follow the same way. The acceleration of the refinement/standardization of the common folk language is the precipitation of what will happen [anyway]. But time does not allow me to [elaborate on] this, so I refer the respected [*Qandalaft*] to read the books of the modern Western linguists on this [subject]." (*Al-Mumkin*, 1882c: 44 [5])
Explanations for perceived Western success
After observing the general progress and success of the West, Şarrāf and Nimr then try to offer an explanation by stating that this general state of Western progress is caused by the general spread of education, literacy and scientific knowledge among all levels of society, the masses as well as the elites.

This situation of general progress, resulting from widespread science, education and literacy, is then contrasted with the Arab situation. Even though Şarrāf and Nimr state that Arab educational experiences seem to indicate that keeping pace with developments in the West is almost impossible, they do not consider retardation intrinsic to Arab society. Therefore, its causes must be found. Şarrāf and Nimr are clear about this: the main reason for the Arab world’s lagging behind in scientific development is the difference between the spoken and the written language. Because of this linguistic cleavage not everybody is able to understand written (scientific) texts and as such science cannot be generally spread in society. Such a society, then, is not able to progress and to be successful. Or as they state at the end of their article:

'We do not consider shortcomings in our brains, nor in our intentions, nor in our efforts, as its [retardation] cause, because the divine Providence has abundantly provided us with all this. Maybe the cause is the distance between the language of our books and the language of our speech. Is it not peculiar that some of those who studied a Western language (luqāh 'afrāngīyah) for only three years are able to understand scientific books [in it] better than they understand them in Arabic, even though they were raised within the walls of Arabic (luqr arabīyah) and studied its morphology, grammar and rhetoric for years?' (Şarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 354 [5])

The main aim is then the general spread of science to all layers of society, an aim which is impeded by the Arab linguistic situation and can only be achieved by linguistic reform.

Linguistic comparisons
Since Şarrāf and Nimr single out the Arabic linguistic situation as the main reason for the lack of progress in Arab society, they compare the linguistic situation in the West to that in the Arab world. As we already said, the Arabic linguistic situation is compared with the linguistic situation in the West as a whole, as well as with specific linguistic situations, such those of the French, English, Italian and Greek.

Their general perception is that in the West there is a linguistic unity between written and spoken language: ‘the book language of the Westerners (luqat al-kutub ‘inda al-‘afrāng) is not very different from the language they speak (la tafruq katir ‘an al-luqah allafi yatakallamuna bi-hā)’ (Şarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 352 [1]).
This perception is also confirmed by the Damascene Literary Society. In their article they refer to French (al-luqah al-fransawiyyah) 'in which the language of speech and the writing language are in agreement' (al-muwafaqah fi-ha luqat al-takallum li-luqat al-kitabah) (Society, 1882a: 554 [5]). The Damascene Literary Society states, however, that even in this 'ideal' situation not every Frenchman is able to read and understand scientific texts written in French, since this requires also a specific scientific background. The Damascene Literary Society is also convinced that not all

'French common people' (gam'i al-'aywam al-faransawiyyin) understand expressions written in French (al-luqah al-fransawiyyah) in the same way as their most specialized scholars understand them and that they understand the poems of their poets in the same way as their poets do. (Society, 1882a: 554 [5])

Also Al-Mumkin suggests indirectly that Westerners also have to study their own languages. After referring to the fact that there are very few writers who are able to write in 'correct Arabic' (al-'arabiyyah al-sahihah) and he relates this to the fact that 'they did not study Arabic in the same way as the Westerners studied their languages (li-'annahum lam yadrusu al-'arabiyyah kamah yadrus al-'afrang luqatihim) (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8]). He continues, 'our case is that of who learns a foreign language (luqah 'agnabiyyah) in order to write in it' (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8]). Al-Mumkin even adds that those who studied Turkish or French (represented here as 'the foreign languages of people living in our country.') write better in it than in Arabic (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8]). So even though Al-Mumkin acknowledges that Westerners also have to study their languages, it seems to cost them less effort than Arabs studying Arabic.

However, Qandalafit emphasizes the fact that there is a difference between spoken and written language, also in Western languages. He refers to the difficulties caused by spelling in English 'so that most of their common people ('anmatanum) who write do not handle the pen before consulting a dictionary' (Qandalafit, 1882b: 109 [5]) and to the fact that

'Western students spend long years to study the basic rules of [their] language and its literature with the aim of becoming schooled in the meanings of the words and of commanding the art of composition.' (Qandalafit, 1882b: 109 [5])

He also continues that

'Among the collection of our proofs is that despite the existence of a great difference between the writing language and the current language among them (al-farq al-ghasim bayn al-luqah al-kitabiyah wa al-sai'ah), we know from hearsay and the attestation by examination that they disapprove of the use of written language use in familiar conversation ('isti'mal al-'alfaz al-luqawiyah al-kitabiyah fi al-hadith al-
ma'nnūs). So then their students do not learn [written language use] by hearing, but only by studying [it] as the Arabs do.’ (Qandalafi, 1882b: 109 [5])

In Qandalafi’s opinion, because of this, the problem of the difference between the Arabic spoken and written language should not be exaggerated.

**How were the linguistic ‘problems’ solved in the West?**

In the opinion of Šarrăf and Nimr, the main reason for this perceived linguistic unity between written and spoken language in the West is the fact that in the West, writers abandoned their ancient or classical languages and started writing in the (modern) spoken languages.

The most noticeable examples are those of Italian replacing Latin and modern Greek replacing classical Greek. When these peoples discovered that their spoken languages had become very different from the languages in which they wrote, they decided to start writing in the spoken languages.

‘When it became clear to the writers who emerged in the twelfth century and afterwards that the language of speech (lügat al-takallum) had become very distant from the book language (lügat al-kutub) they began to write in accordance with the language of speech. The first books that were written in Italian were poetry [books]. But now [all] the books are written in this language and not in Latin, even though Latin remains used for writing, but restrictedly. If the Italians were presently writing only in Latin, science would not be widespread in their region/lands (bilād). What is said about the Italians, can be said about the Greeks who abandoned their ancient Greek language (al-lügah al-yūnānīyah al-qadimah) and used [modern/spoken] Greek (al-rūmīyah) that is related to ancient Greek in the same way as the Arabic we speak (in) (al-‘arabīyah allāfī natakallam bi-lḥ) is related to the Arabic we write (in) (al-‘arabīyah allāfī naktūb bi-lḥ). It is generally known that Latin and [Classical] Greek are two noble and vast ancient languages, which were at a certain time spread over the whole civilized world and books on philosophy, jurisprudence, science and religion were written in them. Nevertheless, the laws of nature predestined their speakers to disregard them. There is nothing that prevents us from following their [example] and regulate the currently spoken language in the Arab region/lands (fa-nādhib lügat al-takallum al-šā‘i‘ah fi al-bilād al-‘arabīyah) and to write our books in it. [Doing so], we would only follow the natural evolution (al-maqrā‘ al-tabī‘) that forces languages to change with the change of time.’ (Šarrăf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])
Can and should the Arabs do the same?
From the last paragraph it appears that Şarrāf and Nimr seem to be convinced that the Arabs can easily do the same and replace their written language with the spoken language. It is even presented as if this is simply following the natural course of evolution.

Al-Mumkin supports this opinion. In response to the question

"[W]hy then do we not refine/revise our language (‘ālā ma là nuhād dib luğatanā)? Why is this not possible for us [in the same way] as it was possible for other communities whose languages changed (al-‘umam allāqīna taqayyarat luğātuhum)?" (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 621 [10])

He states that it is much easier "to refine/revise [= to standardize] the folk language, in analogy with the languages of the other communities (‘umam) (rahdib luğat al-‘āmmah bi-al-qiyās ‘alā luğāt gayrinā min al-‘umam) than to teach everybody the ‘correct language’ (al-luğah al-ṣahīhah) (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [10])."

In these two opinions it appears that the Arabic linguistic situation can be considered analogous and similar to other linguistic situations.

However, even though Şarrāf and Nimr represent the replacement of the written language with the spoken as if it would not mean more than following or applying a natural law, it appears from the remainder of the article that in their opinion there is still a better solution: namely, the replacement of the spoken language with the written.

"Or we have to teach our children to speak correct Arabic (al-‘arabiyah al-ṣahīhah), so that a natural disposition/linguistic habit (malakah) comes in them and that they speak in the same way as they write. This is in our opinion the noblest, safest and most beneficial solution because correct Arabic has an extensive corpus [of vocabulary], precise grammatical rules and a wealth of books. This enables it to keep pace with science more than most other languages of the world, especially since it has two extensive categories [for expansion], namely arabicization [of loans](ta’rib) and compounding (nahbt)." (Şarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [4])

So even if Şarrāf and Nimr compare the Arabic linguistic situation with that of other languages, and even if they consider these developments as ‘natural,’ they consider Arabic somehow as an exception, as appears from their preference for the third solution. However, except for the reference to specific capacities of Arabic (a rich vocabulary, precise grammatical rules and literary heritage and possibilities for lexical expansion), they do not explicitly argue that the Arabic situation is somehow exceptional.
Qandalaft, on the other hand, argues explicitly that the comparison between the linguistic situation of the European 'umam and the Arabic situation is ‘incomplete and deficient.’

‘What becomes clear to us is that the comparison between the Arabs and their language with these communities and their languages is incomplete and deficient (qiṣṣ al-'arab wa luğatihim 'alā ġaši al-'umam wa luğatihim nāqiṣ manqād). Because their change was because of political motives (dawa’in siyāsiyyah), such as the invasion of Northern European tribes (qabā‘il šimālik ‘uruba), against the Romans (al-rūmāniyyūn) and their mixing with them (išrīlātuhum bi-him). So their original language [became] corrupted with the common people and it became a mixture of different languages (bi-hayt āfsadat al-luğah al-‘ašliyyah ‘inda al-‘āmmah fa-‘asbahat maziġan min luğat muḫtalifah) which are hard to decompose and of which the roots are hard to diffuse/generalize. But our language (luğatunā) was not overcome by what happened to these [languages], thank God, and it did not arrive to this bad situation.’ (Qandalaft, 1882a: 696 [61])

Qandalaft thus clearly refuses the comparison between the Arab linguistic situation and that of the European 'umam. The author suggests that the linguistic change that took place in Europe (namely the replacement of Latin by the common folk languages, but this is not explicitly stated in the text) was caused by political factors. In his argument, the Romans were invaded by northern European tribes and because the Romans and these Northern Europeans mixed, the original language (al-luğah al-‘ašliyyah, by which the author again probably means Latin) was corrupted. He even specifies that it became corrupted among the common people (al-‘āmmah), by which he indirectly suggests that the elite were not touched by these changes. The result was a mix of different languages (maziġan min luğat muḫtalifah) that cannot be distinguished anymore and of which the [original] roots (al-‘ašāl) cannot be generally used anymore. The author thus suggests that the mixing between different ‘peoples’ causes linguistic changes, which is of course correct, but it is clear that in his opinion these changes have a negative effect and qualify as ‘corruption’ (faṣād).

The author then thanks God that this did not happen to the Arabic language, but without however explaining why this did not happen. We might assume that his underlying view was the following. With the Arabo-Islamic conquests, the Arab tribes who basically had been living in the Arabian Peninsula, established an Empire that at its height stretched from the Mediterranean to China. Thus they interacted with different peoples who spoke many different languages. In several regions Arabic became eventually the dominant language, (mainly in the area which includes the contemporary Arab countries), while in others it did not, such as in Persia and Turkey. So, even though both the Latin (Roman) and the Arabic situation can be seen as a situation of language contact, for the author the difference probably lies in the fact that the Romans were conquered and thus lost
their dominance in the contact situation, while the Arabs were the conquerors and thus became dominant.

*Qandalafi* seems to forget, however, that even though in many regions Arabic became the dominant language, it nevertheless underwent several drastic changes.

He also argues that Classical Greek could still be made the dominant language in Greece if the Greek decision-makers would aspire to this. This is what the speakers of Arabic (‘ahl al-‘arbīyah) want to do with their language by spreading classical writings and using them in the schools. He further argues that this was probably not possible before because of a lack of means, but since these means are now available, it is only a question of good will and determination.

‘If someone answered that the language of the Greeks, for instance, deviates from what we said, then we ask him what is the proof against the possibility of the general spread of classical Greek if the decision-makers aspire to this and start to publish classical works and to start using it in the schools, as the speakers of Arabic (‘ahl al-‘arbīyah) want to now. If he answered against this that the means to do this were not available in ancient times, we say that they are available now to us in this epoch, thanks to the Benefactor. We only need determined minds and determined wills that proceed and feet that are planted in the demands of each useful discipline. We only need unified hearts and hands helping each other to spread science and the extension of its scope among the elite and the common people (naṣr al-‘ilm wa tawsi‘ nītāqīh bayna al-hāss wa al-‘āmm). If we neglect the benefaction by our restraint and reject it by our negligence, we are like the hungry who refuses bread or the sick who hates the medicine.’ (*Qandalafi*, 1882a: 696 [5])

**Conclusions**

Concluding this section, we can say that the authors were interested in and fascinated by developments in the West, a label by which they generally meant Europe. In general, they did not display a negative attitude toward the West. Their ‘West’ is rather seen as a positive challenge. Western ideas and achievements that are positively evaluated are used by some authors as examples and arguments to sustain their own opinions, or as aims that the Arabs can aspire to.

At the same time, Western superiority is not taken for granted and not seen as something intrinsic to Western mind or society. As we have seen, some authors even stress the fact that Western progress is actually based on earlier Arab scientific achievements.

If the Arabs take the right decisions and apply the right measures, they can easily keep pace with Westerners (muğarrāt al-‘arfang) (*Ṣarrāf & Nimr*, 1881: 254 [5]). This, however, does not necessarily mean that they think that Western examples should be copied as such. Even though similarities and analogies are discovered, most authors consider the Arabic linguistic situation as different from
the Western situation(s) and that the ‘solutions’ that were convenient for other languages do not necessarily apply to Arabic.
LOCAL POSITIONING: ASPECTS OF INTERNAL SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

‘Ammah and ḥāṣṣah: common people and elite

One of the most recurrent social divisions in the debate is that between elite (al-ḥāṣṣah) and common people or the masses (al-‘āmmah). This social cleavage is implicitly, but often also explicitly, related to a linguistic cleavage, namely that between written and spoken language, or between the folk language (luqat al-‘āmmah or al-luqah al-‘āmmiyah) and al-ḥaṣṣāh or al-ḥaṣḥāh. (These linguistic distinctions will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.)

Because of the clear relation that is drawn between the social and the linguistic dividing lines, and since one of the issues in the ḥaṣḥā-‘āmmiyah debate is the participation of the ‘āmmah in the scientific enterprise (at least passively), the perception of social stratification of the participants deserves further examination.

The questions I will deal with are the following: Where did the participants put themselves on the social scale? Which labels are used to refer to social groups? How well- or ill-defined are these labels? How stable were these social divisions? To what extent is the concern about the (scientific) education and participation of the ‘āmmah a real one and how far does it go?

The elitist character of the debate

One of the most obvious elements we have to stress first is that even though the ‘āmmah, their illiteracy and non-understanding of the written language, are among the main concerns in the debate, the ‘āmmah themselves are a priori excluded from it, precisely because of their illiteracy and because of the obvious fact that the debate was conducted in a written medium. Literacy, then, was not only one of the important issues in the debate, it was also an exclusive condition for participation. This seems obvious and trivial, but it seriously influenced the scope of the debate and the kinds of opinions that were expressed and discussed. It means that the debate was conducted exclusively by a literate elite, in which the ‘āmmah were represented and discussed, but in which they themselves had no voice.

From an analytical perspective, this means that throughout the analysis of the debate we have to remain constantly aware of the fact that all participants belonged to a small minority of literates. We say minority because, even if only very rough estimates of literacy rates exist, there is no doubt that the numbers of literates were indeed very small. Ayallon’s (1995) careful estimates show that before the 1920s probably less than 10% of the Egyptian population was able to read, the figures being slightly better in Syria, where 25% of the population was literate. At the same time about 50% of the population of Mount Lebanon could read. At the end of the nineteenth century these figures were even lower: in 1897, around 5.8% of the settled Egyptian population were able to read. Moreover, the
average newspaper reader was male, urban, young and non-Muslim, meaning that women and rural populations were almost completely excluded from literacy (Ayalon, 1995: 141-5).

This means that all the participants belonged to a small group of educated intelligentsia. However, most of them were not members of the traditional religious and political elites, which consisted mainly of members of the ‘ulamā’ (religious elite) and members of the Ottoman establishment and their local allies (political elites).  

They rather belonged to a newly emerging intelligentsia that had received an education that was basically secular, instead of denominational, and focused on Arabic and European languages rather than Turkish. Nevertheless, due to their high level of education, they must be considered an elite, albeit a new one.

Since many of the participants did not belong to traditional elite groups and often were the product of social mobility themselves, we may wonder to what extent this influenced their social views and their perception of social stratification. An examination of the use of person deixis throughout the debate demonstrates that the participants themselves clearly situated themselves in the ḥāṣṣah part of the society and that they distanced themselves from the ‘āmmah.

Most often the ‘āmmah are referred to as ‘they’ and ‘them.’

The following passages from Al-Yazıği, Al-Mumkin and the Damascene Literary Society also illustrate clearly that none of the participants include themselves and their readers in their descriptions.

‘What hinders comprehension are strange words (garīb) or [those words] that are strange (garīb) for them [al-‘āmmah]. For most [strange words] there exist synonyms in their language (lisānuhum) that are [at the same time] faṣīh.’ [emphasis mine] (Al-Yazıği, 1881: 405 [5])

Also Al-Mumkin commented:

‘I used to read our books to some industrial workers and they did not understand well what I did not explain to them in the folk language.’ [emphasis mine] (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [1])

The Damascene Literary Society wrote:

‘One of the learned men (al-‘afādil) wrote once a story in their language (luğatuhum) and it was difficult to read and understand, for both the elite person (al-ḥāṣṣ) and the common people (al-‘āmm).’ (Society, 1882a: 553 [4])

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2 The social background of the participants was discussed in the previous chapter.
It is obvious then that the authors and the public they are writing for ('we') are not considered and do not consider themselves part of the 'āmmah, but of the ḥāṣṣah and that the 'āmmah do not only not participate in the debate: they are not even directly addressed, but only referred to.

The labels ‘āmmah’ and ‘ḥāṣṣah’ and their connotations
Before we analyze the different meanings given to the terms 'āmmah and ḥāṣṣah by the participants in the debate, we will give an idea about the meanings generally given to both terms in Arabic history.

The terms never seem to have been clearly defined in Arabic historical sources. It is significant that while often some general descriptions could be found of the groups belonging to the ḥāṣṣah, the 'āmmah were usually considered as just the 'rest' of society.

This is for instance exemplified by Al-Bustānī who defines 'āmmat al-nās, (the 'āmmah among the people) simply as 'the contrary of the ḥāṣṣah [among the people].' (Al-Bustānī, 1998 (1870): 624)

The ḥāṣṣah among the people (ḥāṣṣat al-nās) is then defined as

'Those who distinguish themselves from the public (ṣunūhūr) by their status (rubāh), or wisdom and knowledge (al-'aql wa al-'ilm), and so on.' (Al-Bustānī, 1998 (1870): 235)

Al-Bustānī also distinguished 'ḥāṣṣat al-malik' ('the ḥāṣṣah (jauwāš) of the king), as those who are near to the king (Al-Bustānī, 1998 (1870): 235).

This is also confirmed by Lewis who states that the ḥāṣṣah included 'the literate, urban classes associated with government; the political, bureaucratic, and military elements; and the holders of religious offices. It includes in particular the two learned classes, the religious and the scribal, the former represented by the ulema, the latter by the bureaucracy' (Lewis, 1988: 67).

Since social reality was more complex, more differentiated and more dynamic than the social dichotomy between ‘āmmah and ḥāṣṣah suggests, the general definition of the terms allowed for different interpretations in different situations and by different persons. Thus some groups could be considered as part of the ḥāṣṣah at certain times and not at others. This assignment to the categories also differed from author to author.

For instance, while rulers and their ministers were always included in the ḥāṣṣah, it is not clear whether educated merchants and landowners were always

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3 See also Ayalon (1987), who states that the term ḥāṣṣah referred to 'the privileged,' a loose term applicable specifically to the ruling establishment and, more broadly, to the social and intellectual elite at large' (Ayalon, 1987: 54).
included. (Lewis, 1988: 67) When they were, it seems to have been because of their riches or educational level.

Also Pellat (1986) has argued in his discussion of medieval works on the linguistic mistakes of the 'āmmah, that in these works the term 'āmmah referred not necessarily to the lowest strata of society, but rather those classes right below the hāssaḥ (Pellat, 1986: 605-610).

For instance, Pellat quotes Al-Ǧāḥīṣ (775-868) stating:

'When you hear me speak of the 'awwām, I do not refer to the peasants, the lower orders, the artisans and the tradesmen, nor the Kurds of the mountains or those who dwell on the islands in the sea ... the 'awwām who belong to our nation and our religious community and possess our culture and morals constitute a class endowed with intelligence and qualities superior to those categories cited above, without ever attaining the level of our khāṣṣa. It should be noted in addition, that the khāṣṣa is also divided into hierarchical strata.' (Pellat, 1986: 605)

Moreover, Pellat further argues, if the language use of the 'āmmah was to be addressed, these works would have been dialect studies, while they are definitely not. As such, adding the argument that such works were to be read by the hāssaḥ, he concludes, the 'laḥn al-'āmmah -literature' had the aim of correcting the language mistakes (laḥn) of the hāssaḥ, which is referred to as the language mistakes (laḥn) of the 'āmmah in order to spare their feelings (Pellat, 1986: 606).

On the other hand, however, the intellectual elite always seems to have considered itself as a part of the hāssaḥ. As Beg (1978) argues:

'As for the intellectual elite, it would require an unusual amount of modesty for authors to place themselves in the 'āmmah when they talk of the two great social classes. In practice, the secretaries of the administration tend to apply the term khawāṣṣ to the rulers' entourage, of which they were a part, whilst literary men and the authors of religious works apply it to an ill-defined elite.' (Beg, 1978: 1099)

Though the terms 'āmmah and hāssaḥ occur frequently in the debate, the lack of a precise and consistent definition is also characteristic for their use in the fushā- 'āmmiyah debate.

Only a few professional specifications for the 'āmmah occur in the debate: Šarrāf and Nimr mention 'a stoker of a steam engine,' 'drivers of vehicles,' 'cultivators of the land' (Šarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 352-353 [1] [2]) and Al-Mumkin refers to 'industrial workers' (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [1], 1882b: 619 [3]) and 'laborers' (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [3]).

On one occasion this lack of precision also leads to a discussion between Al-Mumkin and the anonymous H.H. on who can be considered 'āmmāt (a common person). For Al-Mumkin a commoner ('āmmāt) is supposed to be completely illiterate. From the moment that this person has some knowledge of reading and
writing he stops being ‘āmmāt. He makes a clear distinction between a commoner (‘āmmāt min al-‘awwām) and somebody who did not study the language well (wāhid min alladīnā lam yadrusū al-luqah ġayyidan), stressing that there is a large difference between both categories. (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [4])

On the other hand, the anonymous H.H. states that 'it is no secret that who did not study the language well (man lam yadrus al-luqah ġayyidan), is a common person ('āmmāt) in relation to that what he did not study' (H.H., 1882: 692 [5]). What becomes clear from this second definition is the fact that the degree of ignorance seems to be taken as a criteria for being ‘āmmāt.

Ignorance of the ‘āmmah
The association of the ‘āmmah with ignorance, but also with low moral standards that reoccurs regularly in the debate.

As already pointed out above, the ‘āmmah are mostly associated with ignorance and often ignorance seems to be the defining element for the ‘āmmah. Al-Yāziği refers on several occasions to ‘ağhal al-‘āmmah,‘ (the most ignorant among the common people). He contrasts this with ‘ablâq al-hâṣṣah‘ (the most eloquent among the elite). (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 405 [4]) He also states that with adaptation of language use to the context, the situation of the addressed is meant, ‘depending on his degree of intelligence (al-dâkâ)‘ or stupidity (balâdah), his knowledge (‘ilm) or ignorance (gâhî).’(Al-Yāziği, 1881: 405 [4])

Makdisi (2000) has demonstrated that the association of the ‘āmmah with ignorance was widespread and deeply embedded in the social order of nineteenth-century Ottoman Lebanese society. This is, for instance, exemplified by the fact that one of the synonyms for the ‘āmmah was, apart from ‘ahâltî, also ġâhâl, which literally means the ‘ignorants.’ Makdisi describes this social organization of society as ‘a rigid, status-based social order defined as the rule of knowledge over ignorance’ (Makdisi, 2000: 29). Society was controlled by an ‘elite community [that] regarded its control over religious and secular knowledge as essential to a hierarchical ordering of society’ (Makdisi, 2000: 29). This elite community consisted of Lebanese notables, their official chroniclers, Ottoman government officials and religious leaders. These notables were called the ‘awğuh (lit. the faces) or the ‘a’yân (lit. the eyes) in Arabic, (Makdisi, 2000: 45), the söz sahibleri (lit. the masters of the words) in Ottoman Turkish (Makdisi, 2000: 34).

The stability of social divisions
Another observation is that, despite the lack of precise and consistent definitions, the distinction between hâṣṣah and ‘āmmah seems to be quite stable and is not questioned at all. Consider the follow paragraph, where Al-Yâziği quotes an ancient source without comment:
"Elocution (al-balāğah) is the adaptation of language use (kalām) according to the context (muṭbaqa‘at al-kalām li-muqāda‘at al-ḥāl). By this is meant the situation of the addressed (ḥāl al-muḥāṭah), depending on his degree of intelligence or stupidity [!] of the addressed, his knowledge or ignorance, and so on. So, everyone should be addressed depending on his situation and for every context [an appropriate] language has to be made (wa yuq‘al li-kull maqām maqāl). Language use (kalām) that is specifically intended to be addressed to the elite (al-ḥāṣṣah) and which is not suitable for the common people (al-‘āmmah) is very rare anyway. In my opinion, it should be limited to [genres as] maqāmāt and poetry, since they [these genres] cannot do without elegant and amazing language, and some specific aims of the writer which are not intended for a general [reading] public. In all other cases the common people, rather than the elite, should be taken into consideration (murā‘at al-‘āmmah qābl al-ḥāṣṣah)." (Al-Yāziġī, 1881: 405 [4])

So, despite the modernity of the remark that language use needs to be adapted to the context in which it is used and especially to the receivers, the ḥāṣṣah obviously remain the producers of texts. They produce texts, adapting their language use to the ‘āmmah, while the role of the ‘āmmah is limited to that of receivers. The idea that the ‘āmmah could be producers of texts is not mentioned. The fact that Al-Yāziġī quotes this source without comment indicates that he agrees with it in general terms.

It also seems obvious for Al-Yāziġī that the ḥāṣṣah are the ones to decide whether an utterance is acceptable or not, since real eloquence is that ‘what the common people (al-‘āmmah) understand and what the elite (al-ḥāṣṣah) approve of’ (Al-Yāziġī, 1881: 405 [4]).

The Damascene Literary Society also confirmed that the best language to use is ‘familiar words in usage, which the ḥāṣṣah approve of and which the common people (al-‘āmmah) are acquainted with.’ (Society, 1882a: 555 [9]) This means that the ḥāṣṣah remain the source of linguistic norms, they are the ones to approve or disapprove, while the ‘āmmah have the more passive role of mere understanding.

Also the degree of participation of the ‘āmmah in the scientific enterprise is not clear. Even though Ṣarrāf and Nimr suggest that the ‘āmmah should be able to receive and produce, most authors focus on a more passive role, namely that of receivers and not producers.

Let us reread the opening paragraph of Ṣarrāf’s and Nimr’s article:

"Those who read the story of George Stephenson which appeared in this issue will have seen that this man studied mathematics and other sciences while he was a mere...

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4 The maqāmāt-literature is an Arabic literary genre that is characterized by linguistic artifice, of which rhyming prose is one example. Most famous are 'Al-Maqāmāt' of Al-Harīrī (1053-1122).
stoker of a steam engine who only had a simple knowledge of reading. Those who succeeded best in their efforts can be found among the Westerners who studied the higher sciences such as algebra, engineering, natural philosophy, and mechanics, while they work the basest work and have scientific knowledge [based on] a simple reading. This is because the language of the books of the Westerners is not very different from the language they speak. So a commoner (‘āmmī) among them understands a philosophical work just [in the same way] as the commoner among us understands the story of Bani Hilāl⁵. Their common people avail themselves of books [in the same way] as their elite (hāṣṣātūn) avail [themselves of them]. Therefore you see that the ways to success are open in the same way for their elite as for their commoners and that the qualities of science are widespread among them. You will see that drivers and plowmen participate in newspapers and [that] they buy more books than most of our elite.‘ (Saarrif & Nimr, 1881: 353-4 [1-2]) [emphasis mine]

They refer to the fact that in the West common people both understand and produce scientific and philosophical texts, and that they are able to read and contribute to newspapers and journals. Indirectly the impression is given that the same aim has to be reached in the Arab world, namely the participation of the ‘āmmah in scientific and cultural production.

This is also confirmed by the Damascene Literary Society: the Arabs have to find

’a means to unify the language of speech and the written language so that both the elite and the common people participate in giving and receiving [scientific knowledge] (waṣīlah tābna‘ bayna luqat at-takallum wa luqat al-kitābah li-yātarik al-ḥāṣṣ wa al-āmm fī tāriq al-‘ifādah wa al-‘istifādah)‘ (Society, 1882a: 552 [3])

Qandalaft expresses the aim as follows:

‘the spread of science and the extension of its scope among the elite and the folk people (nasr al-‘ilm wa tawsī‘ niṭāqihi bayna al-ḥāṣṣ wa al-‘āmm).‘ (Qandalaft, 1882a: 696 [6])

Al-Yaṣīḡī also states that after making the ‘āmmah understand al-faṣīḥ it is also important to make them write in it:

’[It] remains to see how to make the commoner (‘āmmī) write in al-faṣīḥ. And this is not an unimportant issue, since it is not in everyone’s capacity to read the language books, so that he has thorough knowledge of synonyms for ‘āmmiyah words.’ (Al-Yaṣīḡī, 1881: 405 [6])

⁵ Bani Hilāl is a famous tribe of the Arabian Peninsula that migrated via Egypt to the Maghrib. They were known as fierce and heroic warriors. The epic of the Bani Hilāl is one of the most famous folk stories in the Arab world and was one of the first study objects of the science of folklore.
Thus participation in the scientific and literary enterprise means that the ‘āmmah are the ones who have to change their language use. This is also confirmed by the Damascene Literary Society:

‘Al-Šayḫ ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Efendi started to write a book that facilitates the common people (al-‘awwām) to replace their language with the original language (‘istibdāl luğatuhum bi-al-luğah al-‘ašíyāh). (Society, 1882a: 556 [11])

However, when we look at the other articles, the emphasis lies on understanding texts produced by the hàṣṣah rather than on producing them.

Al-Mumkin used to read ‘our books,’ which means books written by the elite, to some industrial workers and they were not able to understand what was not explained to them in the common folk language (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [1]). Dāğir refers to the fact that ‘because of the difference between our written and our spoken language, our common people do not understand a thing of what our elite writes on science’ (Dāğir, 1882: 556 [2]). The same emphasis on understanding rather than production can be found in the article by Qandafa (1882a: 694-5 [3]) [In all the quotes: italics mine.]

Conclusions
What we noticed is first of all that the participants in the debate do not associate themselves with the ‘āmmah about which they write.

Even though one of the concerns in the debate is the participation of the ‘āmmah in science and literature, at least passively, that does not induce the participants to reconsider the social cleavage between the ‘āmmah and hàṣṣah. Their concern seems rather the general progress of society rather than improving social conditions. The concern for the ‘āmmah seems to emanate from the fact that they accidentally form the largest portion (al-qism al-‘akbar) of society (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [2]).

Moreover, it seems that this desired participation of the ‘āmmah in science and literature is mostly restricted to the passive role of ‘understanding.’

That is why some authors state that it is necessary to adapt language use so that the ‘āmmah would be able to understand. For most authors this does not mean that the standards of the written language or al-luğah al-faṣṭāh should be adapted in such a way that linguistic elements of the common folk language (al-luğah al-‘āmmiyāh) would become acceptable. No, real eloquent language use, as we already indicated and as will be further emphasized, ‘is that what the ‘āmmah understand and what the hàṣṣah approve of.’ Thus the hàṣṣah are and remain the ones who control the standards of (written) language use.
Chapter 4: The perception of linguistic difference

**Introductory Remarks**

In this chapter, I will present an analysis of how the debaters perceive and deal with linguistic variability in Arabic. First of all, I will focus on the linguistic labels that are used in the debate. As we will see, the use of these labels is not merely referential, in the sense that they refer to pre-existing varieties, it also involves categorization and dividing Arabic variability into separate varieties. The debaters divide Arabic into two main categories, *fuṣḥā* and *ʿāmmīyah*, the latter being usually defined as ‘everything that is not *fuṣḥā*.’ On the other hand, they have to admit that both *fuṣḥā* and *ʿāmmīyah* are characterized by more internal variability than is implied by these terms.

In the next section, I will pay attention to how the debaters perceive and evaluate the different varieties of Arabic, and we will see that in the eyes of the debaters, *fuṣḥā* and *ʿāmmīyah* are not just ‘different,’ but basically ‘unequal.’ I will also focus on how internal variability within *fuṣḥā* and *ʿāmmīyah* is differently evaluated and how it is strategically stressed and downplayed.
LABELS FOR LINGUISTIC VARIETIES

Introduction
In this section I will pay attention to the labels that are used to denote linguistic variability. As we will see, the participants used a wide range of terms. Even though often many synonyms are used to refer to what is obviously considered one language variety, the connotations and associations these synonyms carry with them can be very different. Therefore it is useful to consider each label separately and the ways in which it is used.

Another reason why it is important to examine these labels carefully is that language use at the end of the nineteenth century differs from contemporary language use. As we mentioned in Chapter 2, Arabic underwent some dramatic changes during the nineteenth century, mainly under the impulse of translation from European languages and the development of the printed press. These changes were most dramatically felt at the lexical level. New lexical items were created for concepts previously unknown in the Middle East, already existing words were given a new semantic load, and loan words from European languages entered the Arabic language with or without being adapted to Arabic morphological rules.

A third reason is that labeling is never an exercise in terminology alone. Labeling also implies categorization, drawing boundaries, chopping up the essential continuous reality of linguistic variation into discontinuous blocks, into 'categories of communication' (Gal & Woolard, 1995: 129), such as 'language,' 'dialect,' 'standard' etc.

One of the problems caused by the re-semanticization of already existing words is that they tend to have, at least for a certain period of time, a very ambiguous meaning. At the end of the nineteenth century many modern Arabic words and expressions were used in the same way as they are used in contemporary twentieth-century language use, but by no means all of them.

This semantic ambiguity is characteristic of nineteenth-century texts and we constantly have to remain aware of it. As twentieth-century readers we are easily tempted to read certain lexical items in the way in which they are used now.

As such, we would for instance read 'ummah, as 'nation,' since this is its most common current meaning but, not without losing the nuance that at the end of the nineteenth century 'ummah was most commonly used to refer to a religious community or in a more general sense to any group of people. On the other hand,

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1 For a detailed analysis, see Ayalon (1987).

2 Semantic ambiguity of course always exists to a certain extent, since variability, adaptability and negotiability are always the characteristics of language use (Verschueren, 1995: 14). However, at certain moments (often when important social, political and other changes take place), these characteristics become more salient.
'ummah was not the only word to denote 'nation', since Arab authors were also experimenting with other words to refer to this political concept (Ayalon, 1987). To choose for one or the other interpretation, then, would not do justice to the complexity of language use during that period.

The same can be said about the linguistic labels used in the *fushā*- 'āmmīyah debate. As we will see, the linguistic labels used throughout the debate fluctuate between traditional (classical) and modern usage.

Since this is the first time that the issue of linguistic variability in Arabic was debated on such a large scale, it seems obvious that the participants in the debate also needed to create new lexical items or re-semantize already existing ones in order to be able to express their ideas. This process in itself, on the other hand, must have seriously influenced their and later generations' thinking about language and linguistic variation.

**Luğah**

The most recurrent linguistic label in the debate is *luğah*. Depending on how the term is used, *luğah* can be translated as 'language' in its general sense, as 'a language' or as 'a language variety.' When used with its general meaning, *luğah* occurs without an adjective.

In its two other usages, the meaning of *luğah* is most often further specified by adjectives or by using it in a genitive construction.

For instance, Arabic is generally referred to as 'the Arabic language' (*al-luğah al-'arabīyah*) or simply 'Arabic' (*al-'arabīyah*), and also 'our language' (*luğatunā*) or 'our Arabic language' (*luğatunā al-'arabīyah*). Other languages are

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3 *al-luğah al-'arabīyah*
(article) (noun, fem. sing.) (article) (adjective, fem. sing.)
(the) (language) (the) (Arabic)
the Arabic language

4 *al-'arabīyah* is the elliptical form of *al-luğah al-'arabīyah*

5 *luğatunā*
(noun) (clitic pronoun)
(language) (our)
our language

6 *luğatunā al-'arabīyah*
(noun, sing. fem.) (clitic pronoun) (article) (adjective, sing., fem.)
(language) (our) (the) (Arabic)
our Arabic language
referred to in the same way: ‘a Western language’ (luğah afran gatherings), another language (luğah ʿulūrā), or simply ‘English’ (al-ʿinkhīziyah), ‘French’ (al-faranṣīyah), ‘Latin’ (al-lāṭīnīyah), and so on. When used in the sense of ‘a language’ also the term lisān is used: ‘the Italian language’ (al-lisān al-ʿitālī).

When used as a ‘variety’ of a specific language, again the meaning is often further specified by adjectives: the Classical Greek language (al-luğah al-yunānīyāh al-qadīmah), the common or current languages (al-luğāt al-ṣāʿiʿah), by using it in a compound (genitive construction): ‘the book language’ (luğat al-kutub), the spoken language (luğat al-takallum), or in combination with short relative phrases: ‘the language they speak (in)’ (al-luğah alaṭī yatakallamūna bi-hā), and so on.

In order to understand the lexical item ‘luğah’ fully, we need to discuss the historical development of its meaning. In the Encyclopaedia of Islam, Hadj-Salah gives a good overview of the semantic changes of the term luğah (Hadj-Salah, 19: 803-806).

He states that, whereas the general meaning of luğah is ‘speech’ or ‘language’ it acquired this meaning only after the eighth century. Before this time, luğah was used to refer to ‘a manner of realizing an element of language,’ or what we would call a linguistic variant, in the sense of a specific form of a single linguistic element. The word could also be used in the plural (luğāt) in order to refer to more variants of a certain regional group or tribe.

In its more general sense of ‘manner of speaking,’ luğah (pl. luğāt) was often used as a synonym of both laḥn (pl. ‘alḥān) and nahw (pl. ‘anhā). But

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7 luğah afran gatherings
(∅)(noun, fem. sing.) (adjective, fem. sing.)
(a) (language) (Western)
a Western language

8 luğat al-kutub
(noun) (article) (noun, genitive)
(language) (the) (books) = language of the books
the book language

9 luğat al-takallum
(noun) (article) (noun, genitive)
(language) (the) (speech)
the language of speech = the spoken language

10 al-luğah alaṭī yatakallamūna bi-hā
(article) (noun, sing. fem.) (relative pronoun, sing. fem.) (verb, masc., plural) (prep.) (clitic pronoun, fem.)
(the) (language) (that) (they speak) (in) (it)
the language they speak in
The perception of linguistic difference

whereas *lahn* gradually acquired a sense of solecism and incorrectness, and *nahw* did not have the connotation of deviation, *lugah* remained somewhere in the middle. As such, *lugah* had a connotation of deviation, but not such a strong one as *lahn*, while on the other hand it was not completely free of the connotation in the same way as *nahw* was. So, whereas the meaning of *lahn* developed in the ninth century into 'incorrectness' and that of *nahw* into 'grammar,' the meaning of *lugah* went through different changes.

*Luğah* came to signify all the linguistic data collected from the mouths of the speakers of Arabic, notwithstanding its degree of geographical recurrence, frequency of use or clarity, and notwithstanding their consistency and/or deductibility by means of grammatical rules.

'Thus the entire range of data recorded from the mouths of speakers of 'Arabiyya constituted the *lugha* (taken as a collective: the ensemble of all the *lughat* duly identified.' (Hadj-Salah, 1971: 805)

As such,

'*Luğha*, initially "regional variant or realization" or "datum of the language", comes to designate the entire speech of an ethnic group and even to be identified with the word *lisān* which signifies "tongue" and "language". (Hadj-Salah, 1971: 805)

Though *lugah* acquired the meaning of 'language' or 'speech' in a general sense, as well as 'a specific language of a group,' it also continued to be used in the sense of 'linguistic variant.' It is in the first two senses that *lugah* is mostly used in the debate.

Another dimension is added in expressions such as 'luğat al-takallum,' 'luğat al-‘āmmah,' 'luğat al-kutub' and 'al-luğah al-qadīmah.' This third usage refers anew to sub-divisions of a language, or what we would call 'varieties.' However, these sub-divisions are of a different kind: they are based on how the language is used or in which medium (here: spoken or written), by whom the language is used (here: social class), or when the language was used (here: ancient *qadīmah* or modern *hadīthah*).


We will now have a closer look at how these specific linguistic labels were used in the debate, which labels were used as synonyms and which connotations these synonyms had.

One of the methods to retrace these semantic developments during the debate is to analyze synonymy. As we will see, many linguistic labels are explicitly or implicitly used as synonyms (by the same author or by different authors when
referring to each other's texts), even though they evoke very different associations. By (directly or indirectly) equating two or more different linguistic labels to each other, associations and connotations of one linguistic label are transferred to the other.

This is also one of the reasons why we will have to pay so much attention to the general structure of the debate and the division of the debate into sub-debates and sequences of articles. (See also Chapter 7.) It happens a lot, for instance, that an author first summarizes the debate and then adds his own opinions. Often he quotes previous texts. However, often the author also rephrases previous statements in his own words, using different words to refer to the same concept. When the author then does not indicate that he uses a different label, this means that his reformulation (and use of synonyms) is unmarked. When this reformulation then remains uncontested further in the debate, we have a strong indication that both the author of the reformulation, as well as the other participants in the debate consider the lexical items in question as synonyms.

I will now demonstrate what I mean by this with an analysis of the occurrence and use of linguistic labels in the first article of our sub-debate.

When Ṣarrāf and Nimr opened the debate on linguistic variability in Arabic, they presented the linguistic problem basically as the existence of a large difference between the written and the spoken language. They referred to the written (or the writing) language as 'the book language' (lūgat al-kutub) and 'the Arabic we write (in)' (al-ʿarabīyah alattī naktuṭ bi-hī). The spoken language was referred to as 'the language they speak in' (al-lūgah alattī yatākallamūnā bi-hā), 'the language we speak' (al-lūgah alattī natakallamūhā) or 'the language of speech' (lūgat al-takallum).

This difference is compared to the difference between Latin and Italian, and the difference between Classical Greek (lit. ancient or old Greek) and Modern Greek. This comparison is made explicit in the following sentence:

'[...] modern Greek (al-rūmīyah) which is related to Classical Greek (al-yūnānīyah [al-qadīmah]) in the same way as the Arabic we speak (in) (al-ʿarabīyah alattī natakallam bi-hā) is related to the Arabic we write (in) (al-ʿarabīyah alattī naktuṭ bi-hā).' (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])

Without mentioning it explicitly, written Arabic is then associated with the ancient or classical form of the language, while spoken Arabic is associated with the modern form. It follows that implicitly, a historical dimension is given to the comparison between the written and the spoken language. However, strictly seen, the adjectives 'written' and 'spoken' indicate how the language is used, while 'ancient' and 'modern' refer to historical phases in the development of the language.
Another interesting implicit equation is that of the ‘the written language’ with ‘correct Arabic’ (al-‘arabīyah al-sahīhah).

‘Or we [have] to teach our children to speak correct Arabic (al-‘arabīyah al-sahīhah) so that a natural disposition comes in them and that they speak the same way as they write.’ (Sarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [4]) [emphasis mine]

Equating written Arabic with correct Arabic also indicates indirectly that spoken Arabic is not ‘correct.’

On the other hand, the spoken language is associated with general or common usage. While discussing the second solution, namely ‘that we write our books in the language we speak’ (‘an naktub kutubanā bi-al-luğah alaṣīfna hadalammu bi-hā), Sarrāf and Nimr refer to the fact that other peoples/nations did the same by replacing their ancient languages (luqātihum al-qadāmah) with the generally used language (al-luğat al-šā‘i‘ah). The authors continue with the statement that nothing hinders them to regulate the spoken language commonly used in the Arab countries (luqat al-takallum al-šā‘i‘ah fi al-baladān al-‘arabīyah) (Sarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3]). Again, referring to the spoken language as the currently or generally spoken one somehow implies that the written language is not generally used.

This means already in the first article we find already the following indirect equations: the written language is associated with the ancient (or classical) language, while the spoken language is indirectly associated with the modern language and the currently spoken language (luqat al-takallum al-šā‘i‘ah).

Note, however, that the varieties that are equated to each other are of a different kind. ‘The book language’ and ‘the spoken language’ refer to how the language is used, or to the medium, namely written or spoken, while ‘Classical Greek’ refers to a historical phase of the language. The commonly used languages refers to how widespread the variety is. ‘Correct Arabic’ can be considered an evaluation of the quality of the language.

From written language versus spoken language to fuṣḥā versus ‘āmmīyah

It is also striking that in this article, which can be considered as the opening of the modern debate concerning variability in Arabic and which is most often referred to as the ‘āmmīyah-fuṣḥā debate’, no reference at all is made to these two specific linguistic labels. They do not occur even once in the whole article.

However, we do not have to wait long. In the subsequent article, ‘The Arabic language and success,’ these key terms are introduced into the debate by Ḥaṭīl Al-Yāzialī, though not yet in exactly the same form.

In his summary of the solutions presented in the first article, Al-Yāzialī explicitly equates ‘the spoken language’ (luqat al-takallum) with ‘the common folk
language’ (luğat al-‘āmmah) and the written language (luğat al-kitābah) indirectly with al-luğah al-fasīḥah.

‘One of them is the replacement of our language with another language (‘istibdāl luğatinā bi-luğah ‘umrī). The second is the replacement of the writing language with the language of speech, meaning the folk language (‘istibdāl luğat al-kitābah bi-luğat al-takallum ‘ayn luğat al-‘āmmah). The third is the replacement of the folk language in speech with al-luğah al-fasīḥah (‘istibdāl luğat al-‘āmmah fi al-takallum bi-al-luğah al-fasīḥah)’ (Al-Yaḥṣī, 1881: 404 [1]) [emphasis mine]

As we see, Al-Yaḥṣī equates ‘luğat at-takallum’ (the language of speech) with the ‘luğat al-‘āmmah’ (literally the language of the common people, more freely translatable as the folk language), and ‘luğat al-kitābah’ (the writing language) with ‘al-luğah al-fasīḥah’ (the eloquent language).

This is important because, even though from then on many writers tend to use ‘luğat at-takallum’ (the spoken language) and ‘luğat al-‘āmmah’ (the language of the common people) as synonyms, there is an important difference between the two labels and they evoke different associations and oppositions. ‘Luğat at-takallum’ refers to how the language is used, namely orally in opposition to the written form, while ‘luğat al-‘āmmah’ refers to who uses the language, namely the ‘āmmah (the masses or the common folk), in opposition to the ḥāṣṣah (the elite).

Also ‘luğat al-kitābah’ and ‘al-luğah al-fasīḥah,’ even though used as synonyms, have very different connotations. The writing language again refers to how the language is used, namely in a written form, while ‘the eloquent language’ refers to the quality of language use, namely its degree of eloquence.

However, this equation of the spoken language with folk language, and the written language with the eloquent language (which is only implicitly linked with the elite)\(^\text{11}\), can be in part explained by the fact that the ‘masses’ or ‘the common folk people’ (al-‘āmmah) in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century were largely illiterate, so they only used language orally, while al-luğah al-fasīḥah was mainly a written language, which was only mastered by a small elite.

On the other hand, the equation of the spoken language with luğat al-‘āmmah blurs the fact that the elite also did not and do not speak the written language in their daily lives, i.e. that they also used the spoken language. As such, equating the spoken language with the folk language suggests that the elite write

\(^{11}\) Only once in the debate reference is made to ‘luğat al-ḥāṣṣah’ (the language of the elite). ‘[He argued] that the ‘āmmah do not understand the language of the elite. He proved this by stating that he often used to read some science books to some of the commoners (al-‘umwām) and that they did not understand what he did not explain to them in their language, as they should’ (Society, 1881: 553).
and speak in one and the same language (al-faṣīḥah) and that the common folk speak the spoken language, which is also the folk language (luḡat al-ʾāmmah).

Only a few times in this sub-debate do we find references to the fact that the elite actually also speak ‘the spoken language’ or al-luḡah al-ʾāmmiyah.

In Sarrūf and Nimr’s article we can deduce this fact from their use of person deixis, namely the use of an all-inclusive ‘we’ (which includes ʾāmmah, as well as ḥāṣṣah).

‘[...][...] modern Greek (al-rūmīyah) that is related to Classical Greek (al-yūnīnīyah [al-qādīmah]) in the same way as the Arabic we speak (in) (al-ʾarabīyah alaṭī natakallam bi-hā) is related to the Arabic we write (in) (al-ʾarabīyah alaṭī naktub bi-hā).’ (Sarrūf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])

And:

‘Or we write our books in the language we speak’ (‘an naktub katubanā bi-al-luḡah alaṭī natakallamu bi-hā), (Sarrūf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])

More direct is Dāʿir’s remark that his students in Ġabal Al-Nuṣayr were not able to understand him when he spoke his own ‘folk language’:

‘[T]hey understood me much better when I read to them something from religious, historical or literary books, than when I told them something in my folk language (luḡat al-ʾāmmiyah). Every time when I arrived to a sentence that was difficult for them, I started to explain it in my folk language (luḡat al-ʾāmmiyah) increasing the difficulty and obscurity for them.’ (Dāʿir, 1882: 557 [5])

Similar indirect equations of linguistic labels, namely the equation of the spoken language with the folk language, and the written language with al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah, also occur in the rest of the debate. The Damascene Literary Society reformulated the three solutions as follows:

‘the replacement of our language with another language (ʾistibdāl luḡatinā bi-luḡah ʿuṭrā). The second [method] is the replacement of the writing language with the language of speech, meaning the folk language (ʾistibdāl luḡat al-kitābah bi-luḡat al-takallum ʿayy luḡat al-ʾāmmah). The third is the replacement of the folk language in speech with al-faṣīḥah (ʾistibdāl luḡat al-ʾāmmah fi al-takallum bi-al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah).’ (Society, 1882a: 552-3 [3])

Again the spoken language is equated with the folk language and the written language with al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah. However, here the spoken language is equated directly with the folk language by means of ‘ʿayy’ (meaning ‘that is’ or ‘meaning’), while the written language is only indirectly equated with al-faṣīḥah by using ‘the
written language’ in the second solution and using ‘al-luğah al-faṣīḥah’ in the third solution.

Also Dāgir confirms the equation of the spoken language with the folk language in his summary of the possible options: ‘the replacement of our Arabic language with another language’ (‘ibdāl luğatinā al-‘arabīyah bi-luğah ‘uhrā), or the ‘replacement of the language of writing with the folk language’ (‘ibdāl luğat al-kitābah bi-luğat al-‘āmmah), or ‘the replacement of the folk language with the language of writing’ (‘ibdāl luğat al-‘āmmah bi-luğat al-kitābah). (Dāgir, 1882: 556 [2])

Even though he does not mention ‘al-faṣīḥah,’ he quotes Al-Yāzīghī’s statement without any remark concerning his usage of al-faṣīḥah, which means that the interchangeability of ‘luğat al-kitābah’ and ‘al-faṣīḥah’ is unmarked for him.

The fact that the equation between ‘luğat al-kitābah’ and ‘al-luğah al-faṣīḥah,’ and between ‘luğat al-takallum’ and ‘luğat al-‘āmmah’ occurs consistently and is unmarked means that this equation is generally accepted by the authors.

Other linguistic labels for al-luğah ‘āmmīyah and their connotations

Between classical and modern language use: luğat al-‘āmmah-al-luğah ‘āmmīyah

The word ‘‘āmmīyah’ is used in the debate as an adjective derived from the noun ‘‘āmmah.’12 This form is constructed by stripping ‘‘āmmah’ of its feminine ending –ah and by adding –fy (masculine) or –yah (feminine). This kind of adjective is called a nisbah- or nisf- form in Arabic.

The nisbah-form is a device to derive adjectives from nouns. Though these derivations are most often used as adjectives, they can also be used as nouns. For instance, ‘yūnānī’ (Greek) is a nisbah-adjective derived from ‘al-yūnān’ (Greece). It can be used as the adjective ‘Greek’ as well as the noun ‘Greek’ (in the sense of a Greek national). In the same way the feminine form ‘al-yūnānīyah’ in the construction ‘al-luğah al-yūnānīyah’ (the Greek language) is an adjective, but it can also be used independently as ‘al-yūnānīyah.’ When used in that way, it is a noun meaning ‘Greek’ (as a language).

In the same way, ‘‘arabīyah’ (Arab-Arabic, fem.) can be used as an adjective, e.g. ‘bint ‘arabīyah’ (an Arab girl) or ‘al-luğah ‘arabīyah’ (the Arabic language), and as a noun, e.g. ‘‘arabīyah’ (an Arab (fem.)) or ‘al-‘arabīyah’ (Arabic (as a language)).

12 In Arabic it is possible to derive adjectives from nouns by reducing the noun to its root and adding –fy, –yah, –yān, for the masculine, feminine and masculine plural forms respectively. This construction is called a nisbah-form.
In modern Arabic language use, *nisbah*-forms in the feminine are also often used to create abstract nouns. For instance, ‘*hizb*’ (factional) is a *nisbah*-form derived from ‘*hizb*’ (political party). ‘*Hizbīyah*’, which is the feminine form of the adjective ‘*hizb*’, can still be used as an adjective, but is also used as a noun meaning ‘factionalism.’

In the sub-debate that we are presently analyzing, ‘*‘ammīyah*’ is only used as an adjective (namely in combination with a noun) and not as an independent noun.

For instance *Al-Yāziği* refers to ‘*al-lugāt al-‘āmmīyah*’ (the folk languages) (*Al-Yāziği*, 1881: 404 [2]) and ‘*al-‘alfāz al-‘āmmīyah*’ (words in the folk language) (*Al-Yāziği*, 1881: 405 [6]). These examples can also be found in the other articles. ‘*Al-lugāt al-‘āmmīyah*’ is also used by the Damascene Literary Society (Society, 1882a: 553 [4]) and by *Dāğir* (*Dāğir*, 1882: 557 [4], [5]), who uses also ‘*lugāt šatā ‘āmmīyah*’ (several folk languages) (*Dāğir*, 1882: 557 [4]. ‘*Al-‘alfāz al-‘āmmīyah*’ is also used by *Dāğir* (*Dāğir*, 1882: 557 [5]). Another combination which occurs is ‘*al-arabīyah al-‘āmmīyah*’ (folk Arabic) (*Al-Mumkin*, 1882a: 494 [2], 496 [5]).

However, the most frequently occurring combination is ‘*al-lugah al-‘āmmīyah*’, which is used as an alternative for ‘*lugat al-‘āmmah*’ (the folk language) (*Al-Mumkin*, 1882a: 495), (Society, 1882a: 553), (*Dāğir*, 1882: 557, 558, 559), (H.H., 1882: 691, 694).

*Dāğir* sometimes also uses ‘*al-lugah al-‘āmmah*’, which literally means ‘the general language.’ However, from the ways in which he uses this construction it appears that he regards it as a synonym for the folk language. (*Dāğir*, 1882: 557 [4])

Rabin mentions that in medieval times ‘*lugat al-‘āmmah*’ was used, while in modern times ‘*al-lugah al-‘āmmīyah*’, ‘*al-dārīgah*’ or ‘*al-lahagāt*’ are used to refer to post-Islamic dialects (Rabin, 1960: 561). The fact that both ‘*lugat al-‘āmmah*’ and ‘*al-lugah al-‘āmmīyah*’ are frequently used in the debate confirms our assertion that aspects of language use at the end of the nineteenth century were in a period of transition from classical to modern language use.

Our observation that ‘*‘ammīyah*’ is only used as an adjective also suggests that at the end of the 19th century, ‘*al-‘āmmīyah*’ was not yet considered a distinct linguistic concept. This is further supported by the fact that even *Butrus Al-Bustānī*’s *Muhīt al- muḥīt*, which was published in 1870 and is considered to be one of the first modern Arabic dictionaries, does not mention *‘āmm* or *‘ammīyah* with special reference to language or language use. Nor does ‘*‘ammīyah*’ occur as a separate lemma. (*Al-Bustānī*, 1998 (1870): 634) This is also the case for Kazimirski’s Arabic-French dictionary, which was published in 1860.

Together with the ways in which the terms are used in the debate, this suggests that terms such as ‘*‘ammī, ‘‘ammīyah, ‘*lugat al-‘āmmah*’ or ‘*al-lugah al-‘āmmīyah*’ could be and were used before the twentieth century with reference
to language and language use. However, they were not yet conceived of as specific linguistic concepts or notions, and therefore compiler's of dictionaries did not think they deserved a separate lemma.

We will see that as the debate develops, lexical items such as ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ or just ‘al-‘āmmiyah’ develop are developed into linguistic concepts of their own, which are most often used in opposition to ‘luğat al-kitābah,’ ‘al-luğah al-faṣīḥah’ or ‘al-luğah al-fuṣḥā.’ In other words, this debate allows us to trace these developments.

In twentieth-century Arabic dictionaries, monolingual as well as bilingual, we find ‘āmmiyah’ as a separate lemma. For instance, the Arabic Larousse dictionary explains ‘āmmiyah as the opposite of the official language (al-luğah al-rasmiyyah) or the literary language (al-luğah al-‘adabiyyah), or fuṣḥā’ (Larousse, 1988: 869). In the same dictionary also ‘kalām ‘āmmiyah and ‘lahgah ‘āmmiyah are mentioned and explained as follows: ‘the usual speech of the people (kalām al-nās ‘aw ‘ahadithum al-‘adīyah), the opposite of al-luğah al-fuṣḥā or the literary language’ (Larousse, 1988: 869). The Arabic-English dictionary by Hans Wehr translates ‘al-‘āmmiyah as ‘popular language, colloquial language’ (Wehr, 1980: 640).

This means that the use of the term ‘‘āmmiyah’ underwent some important changes, of which the beginnings already appear in the debate in 1881. We can assume that ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ gradually became more frequently used than ‘luğat al-‘āmmah,’ ultimately replacing it. The other development then was that, as the use of ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ became more current, it was shortened to ‘al-‘āmmiyah,’ which developed into a separate noun. The beginnings of this further development, however, do not occur until the last article of this sub-debate.

Qandalaft writes about the change from ‘the language’ (al-luğah) to ‘the folk language’ (al-‘āmmiyah). (Qandalaft, 1882b: 108 [3]) and about the difference between the ‘written language’ (al-luğah al-kitābiyyah) and ‘the folk language’ (al-‘āmmiyah). (Qandalaft, 1882b: 109 [5]) However, in the same article he also frequently uses the label ‘luğat al-‘āmmah.’

We will have to pay close attention to the point in the debate at which ‘‘āmmiyah’ starts to be used more frequently as a separate noun and finally replaces the pre-modern ‘luğat al-‘āmmah.’ As already said, the opposition to ‘the written language’ or to ‘al-luğah al-faṣīḥah’ or ‘al-fuṣḥā,’ which is mentioned by Larousse, is already apparent in this phase of the debate.

Also on the semantic level the label underwent some important changes. I have referred briefly to the fact that the labels ‘luğat al-‘āmmah’ and ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ have social connotations, namely in their sense of ‘the language of the

13 The English version of the dictionary was first printed in 1961 and was an updated translation of the Arabic-German dictionary by Hans Wehr, which first published in 1952.
common folk.' We have also mentioned that this obscured the fact that also the elite actually spoke and still speak ‘āmmiyah.

In most contexts in which the labels are used in this phase of the debate, these social connotations seem to be in place. Therefore, we also translated them as 'folk language.' However, this becomes somehow problematic when one of the participants, of whom we said that they considered themselves as members of the elite, refers twice to his own language use as ‘luğat al-‘āmmiyah’ (Dâqîr, 1882: 557 [5]). Thus a tension emerges between the use of the adjective (‘āmmiyah’), which refers to the common folk and an element of person deixis ('my'), referring to the elite as it is used by a member of the elite for self-reference.

Because of this we may suggest that in this usage there is some transition from ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ in the strict sense of ‘folk language’ to the sense of ‘dialect’ or ‘colloquial.’ (Note that a similar form of self-reference would not have been possible with the label ‘luğat al-‘āmmah.’)

Lahgah
Another term to refer to linguistic varieties is ‘lahgah’ (pl. lahaqât).

‘Lahgah’ was originally another word for ‘tongue’ (lisân) or the ‘tip of the tongue.’ It is also used in the sense of ‘the language of a person for which he is naturally disposed, which he is used to and with which he grows up.' (Lisân al-‘arab) This definition, which is also given by Al-Bustânî in Muhîî al-Muhîî (Al-Bustânî, 1998 (1870): 827), comes close to what we would call ‘vernacular,’ in the sense of the most casual language use of a person when he pays the least possible attention to the way he/she speaks.

The term also refers the way in which one speaks. Both Lisân al-‘arab and Al-Bustânî mention ‘faṣîḥ al- lahgah’ (he has a clear way of speaking). Al-Bustânî also mentions ‘sâdiq al- lahgah’ (he has a sincere way of speaking) (Al-Bustânî, 1998 (1870): 827).

Kazimirski’s dictionary, which is roughly contemporary to Al-Bustânî’s Muhîî al-Muhîî, only mentions ‘lahaqah or lahagah: Langue, faṣîḥ al- lahagah: Qui parle avec facilité et abondance’ (Kazimirski, 1860: 1030).

The term occurs a few times in the debate, most often in the sense of ‘vernacular’ or ‘dialect,’ depending on the context in which it is used. If we consider the following examples we notice that where ‘luğat al-‘āmmah’ is used as a collective, namely the ‘language of the common folk,’ ‘lahgah’ is used to refer to more specific sub-divisions of this folk language. In the following paragraph the subdivision is made on a geographical basis.

‘Concerning his [Al-Yâqîî’s] opinion about the use of the folk language (luğat al-‘āmmah), that with the difference between the dialects of the Syrians, the Egyptians,
the Iraqi’s and the Maghribians (lahağät al-sûríyyin wa al-îrâqiyyin wa al-mišrîyyin wa al-maġribîyyôn) it is difficult [...].’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [2])

Here, Al-Mumkin refers to rough geographical varieties, namely those spoken by what he calls the Syrians (which includes inhabitants of present-day Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine), the Egyptians, the Iraqi’s and the Maghribians (which probably refers to inhabitants of not only Morocco, but also Algeria and Tunisia.)

Dâğir also makes a geographical distinction, but a much more detailed one within the rough category Syria:

‘The dialect (lahgah) of which province of Syria (muqāta’ah) will we use, or rather of which city (madīnah), which village (qariyah), or rather which neighborhood (ḥĪrah)?’ (Dâğir, 1882: 557 [4])

Other references to ‘lahgāh’ in the sense of vernacular-dialect can be found in the following paragraphs. Here Dâğir refers to his experience in Ġabal Al- Nuṣayriyyah, which is a region in Syria.

‘I had to spend a lot of time learning their vernacular/dialect (lahgah) and their conventional language use (‘iṣṭilāḥ’ kalāmihim), since I felt to be a stammering barbarian among them.’ (Dâğir, 1882: 557 [4])

In the next paragraph Dâğir refers again to ‘lahgāh’ as a subdivision of the folk language, without further specifying whether it is a geographical or social one.

‘Suppose that it is possible to use one of its dialects (‘iḥād min lahağatihā) and that the [first] obstacle was dropped [...]’. (Dâğir, 1882: 558 [8])

In the debate, ‘lahgāh’ is also used in the sense of way of speaking or pronunciation:

‘between each of these languages and its sister there is a difference of pronunciation (lahgah) and conventions (‘awdā’), which is at least as large as the difference between each of them and al-luğah al-faṣīlāh’. (Al-Yâziği, 1881: 404 [2])

And:

14 Wehr mentions for ‘iṣṭilāḥ: ‘(colloquial, linguistic) usage.’ (Wehr, 1980: 523) This term ‘kalām ‘iṣṭilāḥ’ occurs also a few other times in the debate. The Society refers to ‘al-kalimät al-iṣṭilāḥiyah’ (Society, 1882a: 553, 555) when referring to the language use of the merchants, stating that their language use generally adheres to al-faṣīlāh, even though sometimes some ‘kalimät ‘iṣṭilāḥiyah’ occur and ‘gayr al-iṣṭilāḥ min al-alfāz al-ḥāfiyyah ‘alā ba’d al-‘awwān’ (Qandalaft, 1882b: 108) ‘wa al-kalimât al-iṣṭilāḥiyah lâ budda minhā.’ (Qandalaft, 1882b: 109)
'But the fasılıhah language of civilization is the same (luğat al-hadārah al-fasılıhah hiya hiya) in Egypt, Syria, the Maghrib, and Iraq, in its morphology, grammar, and all its literature unless for some rare exceptions, in contrast to the folk language (luğat al-‘āmmah). Its pronunciation (lahğah) is diverse, and its conventions are diverse.' (Dāğır, 1882: 558 [7])

However in the paragraph that immediately follows ‘lahğah’ can be translated as ‘pronunciation’ and ‘dialect’:

‘The Syrian laughs at the dialect/pronunciation of the Egyptian (lahğat al-miṣrī), the Egyptian laughs at that of the Maghribian, the Maghribian with that of the Iraqi, and the Iraqi with that of the Syrian. The truth is that they all cause indisputably laughter and ridicule. Without consensus about one dialect (lahğah wāhidah) the situation will become very difficult.’ (Dāğır, 1882: 558 [7])

Since at the time of the debate ‘luğah’ could be used to refer to a language as well as a language variety, ‘lahğah’ could be used as an alternative for ‘luğah.’ However, whereas ‘luğah’ could be used to refer to a specific language, for instance Arabic, Greek or Latin, ‘lahğah’ could not.

We will see that in twentieth-century language use, ‘luğah’ is usually used to refer to a language, most often even an officially recognized language, whereas ‘lahğah’ is used to refer to a variety of a language, most often in the sense of vernacular or regional dialect. As such, ‘luğah’ is most often translated as ‘language’ whereas ‘lahğah’ can be translated as ‘variety’, in its general and neutral sense, or as ‘dialect’, ‘vernacular’, ‘jargon’, depending on the context in which it is used.

In modern dictionaries such as Larousse, ‘lahğah’ is explained as ‘the language (luğah) to which a person is accustomed by nature (min ṭabt’atihi).’ And also: ‘a way of rendering in language,’ for instance ‘lahğah badawīyah (Bedouin dialect), ‘lahğat al-tuğgar’ (salesmen jargon), ‘lahğah magribīyah’ (Moroccan dialect), but also ‘kān šadīd al-lahğah ft ṣawābihi’ (he used a harsh tone in his answer) (Larousse, 1988: 1104). Hans Wehr translates ‘lahğah’ as ‘manner of speaking, tone, dialect, vernacular, language’ (Wehr, 1980: 880).

This means that ‘lahğah’ can refer to a geographical as well as a social variety, and also to the degree of formality of the variety in question.

_Kalimät ’istilāḥiyah_

When citing his experiences in Ġabal al-Nuṣayrīyah, Dāğır referred briefly to the fact that he
‘had to spend a lot of time to learn their vernacular/dialect (lahğah) and [their specific] language use (‘istilâh kalâmihim), since I felt to be a stammering barbarian among them.’ (Düşûr, 1882: 557 [4])

The general meaning of ‘istalâh is that of a form of language use that is specific or conventional to certain contexts or domains of knowledge, as well as to certain groups of speakers. Thus it can be used to refer both to very technical language use, jargon or to refer to colloquial language.

It is in this way that the Society uses the adjective derived from ‘istalâh, namely ‘istalâhî, when describing the language use of merchants. The Society states that their language use generally adheres to al-faṣîhah, even though sometimes they use some ‘kalimât ‘istilâhîyah.’ (Society, 1882a: 553 [4]) By saying this, the Society means that their language is sometimes jargonic.

A few paragraphs later the Society uses ‘istalâh in the sense of ‘terminology,’ in its discussion concerning the fact that all modern sciences are in fact derived from the ancient sciences. The new scientific specializations are thus characterized just in terms of new terminology that is added.

‘Indeed, in this epoch some issues of a domain were [further] specified with a special name. […] This is incontestably a question of terminology (‘istalâh).’ (Society, 1882a: 555 [9])

When discussing that the new Western discoveries can easily be translated into Arabic, the Society argues:

‘The lack of some words that are synonymous to some terminological words (al-kalimât al-‘istilâhîyah) is not harmful, as long as the arabicization belongs to the categories of Arabic and the coining of new [words] is easy.’ (Society, 1882a: 555 [9])

In the following paragraph Qandalaft uses the term ‘‘istalâhî’ both in the sense of language use that is conventional and therefore easy to understand for everybody, and in the sense of language use that is specific for a certain domain (in this case science).

‘With regard to vocabulary we say that in our language there are famous and widespread writings on geography, arithmetics, algebra, engineering, natural philosophy, chemistry, algorithm, astronomy and medicine. Very rarely they contain non-jargonic words (gayr al-‘istilâhî min al-alfâz) that are unknown for the ‘âmmah. Such jargonic words (al-kalimât al-‘istilâhîyah) are inevitable anyway.’ (Qandalaft, 1882b: 108-109 [4])
The Arabic that we suckled with the mother milk
Finally, al-‘änniyah is also referred to a few times as ‘the Arabic that we sucked with the mother milk’ and which is almost the only [language] our tongues speak fluently (al-‘arabiyah alaṭi narda‘uhā ma‘a al-laban wa takād ‘alsunanā lā tanṭaliq ‘illa bi-hā) and ‘the language that you sucked with the mother milk’ (al-luğah alaṭi rada‘tumūḥa ma‘a al-laban) (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 495 [4]).

This phrase describes al-‘änniyah as a language that is naturally acquired (suckled with the mother milk), i.e. without difficulty, as opposed to al-faṣīḥah, which is acquired only after a long learning process. (See also above, for Larousse’s definition of laḥğah as the language to which a person is naturally accustomed.)

Even though, H.H. does not share Al-Mumkin’s position, he also uses a variant of this phrase:

‘But [for] the folk language there is no incentive for its unification, since the Aleppan does not see the necessity of giving preponderance to the language of the Damascene, in addition to the Iraqi for instance. Neither does he see the necessity of mixing his language which he sucked with the milk of his childhood (mażğ luğatihi alaṭi ‘irtaḍa‘ahā ma‘a libān al-sibā) with the language of another. In contrast to when it is asked from him to replace [his language] with the Muṣari language, of which he thinks that it is the noblest language and that it is one of the means for [obtaining] his happiness. He would not hesitate to do this …’ (H.H., 1882: 693 [8])

H.H. suggests that speakers are strongly attached to their vernaculars and that they would not accept to mix it or replace it with somebody else’s vernacular, but only with a language (variety) that is better.

Other linguistic labels for al-faṣīḥah and their connotations

Al-faṣīḥah
One of the most frequent alternatives for the label ‘the written language’ is ‘al-luğah al-faṣīḥah.’

In its most general sense, faṣīḥ means ‘clear’ or ‘pure’ (Grunebaum, 1965: 824). Suleiman (1996b) adds to this that ‘in the more restricted domain of linguistic study, faṣāḥah is generally used to designate a constellation of meanings covering, among other things, fluency in speech, the correct articulation of utterances, and grammatical accuracy’ (Suleiman, 1996b: 219). In this more specific sense ‘faṣāḥah’ is often translated as ‘eloquence’ and ‘faṣīḥ’ as ‘eloquent.’

The adjective ‘faṣīḥ’ can be used to describe a person as well as language use, more specifically, words or sentences (Grunebaum, 1965: 824).
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Since the meaning of ‘fasāḥah’ is one of the themes in the debate and since a lot of references are made to the classical literature on this subject, I will discuss the concept fasāḥah in more detail below. In this section we will only pay attention to the usage of ‘al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah’ as a linguistic variety.

As already mentioned, the written language and al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah are directly and indirectly equated to each other and, as such, used as synonyms. This equation suggests implicitly that al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah was not used orally, but only in a written form. It is true that al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah was and is most often used for writing purposes, but it was and is also used orally. On the other hand, texts written in varieties other than al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah have also always existed.

Moreover, the equation also suggests that the written language is ‘eloquent,’ and other forms are not.

Al-fuṣḥā

Al-fuṣḥā is an alternative for al-faṣīḥah. In the debate the terms are used interchangeably. As already mentioned in Chapter 1, it is the superlative form of al-faṣīḥah. So, whereas we can translate ‘al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah’ as ‘the eloquent language’, we can translate ‘al-luḡah al-fuṣḥā’ as ‘the most eloquent language.’ Fuṣḥā, however, only occurs a few times in this sub-debate.

‘I love al-fuṣḥā passionately’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 495 [4])

And:

‘Therefore, diminishing the value of al-‘arabīyah al-fuṣḥā by replacing it with a language that does not conform to its name (‘āmniyah) except for that it is in all the regions conform in the narrowness of its rules and the lack of harmony without limitations and bounds’ (Dāghir, 1882: 559 [12])

Correct Arabic: al-‘arabīyah al-saḥīḥah

In the beginning of this section we already referred briefly to the fact that the writing language is also referred to as ‘correct Arabic’ (al-‘arabīyah al-saḥīḥah). We also mentioned that this indirectly suggests that the writing language or al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah (al-fuṣḥā) is the only correct language and that all other varieties are considered ‘incorrect,’ not just ‘different.’

This equation also reappears often in the debate.

‘Or we have to teach our children to speak correct Arabic (al-‘arabīyah al-saḥīḥah), so that a natural disposition (malakah) comes in them and that they speak in the

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15 Brackets original.
same way as they write. This is in our opinion the noblest, safest and most beneficial solution because correct Arabic has an extensive lexicon, precise grammatical rules and a richness of books.' (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [4])

Al-Mumkin, who is the only, but staunch, defender of the folk language, does not contest this usage. On top of this he also uses ‘al-‘arabiyyah al-ṣaḥīḥah’ frequently as a synonym for al-ṣaḥīḥah.

‘Does he not see that correct Arabic (al-‘arabiyyah al-ṣaḥīḥah) is a collection of the different linguistic variants of the Arab tribes (nağmā lughāt qabā’il al-‘arab al-muḥtiāliyā’)? [...] In the same way as it was possible for the scholars of the first centuries of the Hijra to collect/unify ancient Arabic (al-‘arabiyyah al-qadīmah), [...]’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [2])

He does not seem to notice that using this label indirectly undermines his own position because of the implication of incorrectness of ‘al-luqā’ah al-‘āmmiyā’ which is embedded in the label. This is supported by the fact that he did not just use the label once, let us say ‘by accident,’ but rather frequently:

‘Where are the writers [who write] in correct Arabic (al-‘arabiyyah al-ṣaḥīkah)? How few they are! To what can we relate this? Is it not because they did not study Arabic in the same way as the Westerners study their languages?’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8])

And:

‘But to make the correct Arabic (al-‘arabiyyah al-ṣaḥīkah) a natural disposition/linguistic habit to the present generation requires that everybody, old and young, toils very hard, as Ibn Ḥalidin mentioned. Despite all this, we are on the side of opinion and examination. The truth will appear from the void. The Benevolent Society of Damascus started with the simplification of applying the third solution. Hopefully it also starts to use it, because returning to correct Arabic (al-‘arabiyyah al-ṣaḥīkah) is not impossible, even though I consider it more difficult than refining/revising the folk language (taḥdīb lughāt al-‘āmmah), in analogy with the languages of other communities (lughāt ġayrinā min al-‘umam). The aim of both sides is to spread science and the welfare of the fatherland (al-waṭan) and the nation (al-‘ummah).’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 621 [10])

The ancient language: al-luqā’ah al-qadīmah

In the first article Ṣarrāf and Nimr indirectly associated the writing language with the ancient or classical form of the language, by comparing ‘luqat al-kunūb’ with Latin and Classical Greek. This association can also be found in the first article of Al-Mumkin who uses ‘al-luqā’ah al-qadīmah’ as an alternative for ‘al-luqā’ah al-
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faṣīḥah.'

‘In the same way as it was possible for the scholars of the first centuries of the Hijra to collect/unify ancient Arabic (al-‘arābiyah al-qādīmah), […]’ (Al-Munkin, 1882a: 494 [2]) [emphasis mine]

And:

‘Concerning the loss which is caused by abandoning the ancient language (al-‘arābiyah al-qādīmah) […]’ (Al-Munkin, 1882a: 494 [3]) [emphasis mine]

And:

‘Furthermore, if the folk language (al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah) starts to be used the ancient language (al-‘arābiyah al-qādīmah) will not be annihilated, but rather that it will be considered as Classical Greek, Latin or Sanskrit.’ (Al-Munkin, 1882a: 495 [4]) [emphasis mine]

And:

‘The Arabic that we suckle with the mother milk and which is almost the only language our tongues speak fluently became very distant from the ancient language (al-‘arābiyah al-qādīmah).’ (Al-Munkin, 1882a: 495 [4]) [emphasis mine]

And:

‘The unification and regulation/standardization of the folk language is possible, in the same way as it was possible to collect and regulate/standardize ancient Arabic (gām‘ al-‘arābiyah al-qādīmah wa dāḏīhā) more than thousand years ago.’ (Al-Munkin, 1882a: 496 [5]) [emphasis mine]

The use of the term ‘al-luğah al-qādīmah’ gives a historical dimension and depth to ‘al-faṣīḥah,’ which ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ implicitly does not seem to have.

On the other hand, we must take notice of the fact that the label is almost exclusively used by Al-Munkin, who is the only defender of replacing the ‘written language’ with the ‘spoken language.’ The fact that he uses the label ‘al-luğah al-qādīmah’ suggest that he uses it with the implication that it is not only ‘ancient’ but also ‘obsolete,’ not of his time anymore. In this way, ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ receives a connotation of modernity or contemporaneity.

This is also indirectly suggested by Şorrāf and Nimr’s account, in their comparison of the ‘written language’ with Latin and Classical Greek, and the ‘spoken language’ with their modern derivatives like Italian and Modern Greek.
The language of Mudar: luğat mudar
The term 'luğat mudar' too has a historical dimension.
Both the expressions 'luğat mudar' (the language of Mudar) and 'al-luğah al-mudariyyah' (the Mudarī language) refer to the confederation of Northern Arabian tribes, Mudar.

In Arab history Mudar is considered the son of the common ancestor of the Northern Arabian tribes, Niẓār. Mudar settled in Mecca. Among the tribes that are considered to be the descendants of Mudar are the Qurayš, who were the tribe to which the Prophet Muhammad belonged (Kindermann, 1995: 352).

In the same way as Mudar was regarded in Arab history as one of the ancestors of the Northern Arabs, the language of Mudar was seen as the predecessor of Arabic.

'The northern region is regarded as the home of the Mudar language, the forerunner of Arabic, and the southern region is considered the locus of the Himyarite language spoken by the Yemenites and their neighbors. This division became more pronounced after the rise and expansion of Islam, when the Mudar language was accorded supreme attributes and superior qualities. Such views were rationalized by pointing to the fact that the Qur'ān was revealed in one of the Mudar dialects, the dialect of the Qurayš tribe.' (Chejne, 1969: 34-35)

However, as also Chejne suggests, the identification of the language of the Koran with the dialect of the Qurayš was only made by later scholars. This is also supported by Rabin:

'As to the origins of the poetical language itself, earlier Muslim tradition sought it in the various tribes, while later scholars, no doubt for theological reasons, identified it with the dialect of the Kuraysh.' (Rabin, 1960: 565)

Since the Qurayš descended from Mudar, and since in later centuries of Islam the Qurayš, being the tribe of Muhammad, gained a clear religious connotation, their ancient ancestor Mudar came to share this religious connotation. Thus a religious dimension was added to the historical one.

The reference to 'luğat mudar' was first introduced into the debate by Al-Mumkin when he quoted the famous historian Ibn Ḥaldūn (1332-1406). (The quote by Al-Mumkin of Ibn Ḥaldūn is marked with double quotation marks.)

'Your Benevolent Society, the founders of Al-Muqtaṣaf and the great scholar Ibn Ḥaldūn believe from their heart that the language that we speak in this epoch is "an independent language different from the language of Mudar (luğat mudar)", meaning ('ayy) al- 'arabiyyah al-faṣīḥah.' (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8])
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And

"The natural disposition/linguistic habit of the Muḍarī language (malakat al-līsān al-mudārī) of this epoch has disappeared and has been corrupted. The language of this complete generation (lughat hādī al-ghayl kullihim) is different from the language of Muḍar (lughat mudār) in which the Koran was revealed." (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8], quoting Ibn Ḥaldān)

After the first quote Al-Mumkin explains 'lughat mudār' by adding 'ayy al-'arabīyah al-faṣīḥah' (meaning al-lughah al-faṣīḥah). As such, he equates directly 'lughat mudār' with 'al-lughah al-faṣīḥah,' which is in accordance with what we described above.

The fact that Al-Mumkin deemed it necessary to explain the term also suggests that 'lughat mudār' was not a current linguistic term (anymore) at the end of the nineteenth century, while it probably was in medieval Arabic. (Ibn Ḥaldān used it and before him Ibn Ḥazm (d. 1064) in the 11th century.)

The idea that 'lughat mudār' was not current in nineteenth-century language use is further supported by the fact that nineteenth-century dictionaries do not mention 'lughat mudār,' but only make reference to the tribe itself. Note also that Ibn Ḥaldān himself used alternately 'lughat mudār' and 'al-līsān al-mudārī.'

After its first introduction in the debate, the term is used occasionally by Al-Mumkin himself and other participants in the debate. Labels alternate between 'lughat mudār,' 'arabīyah mudār,' and 'al-lughah al-mudārīyah.'

'I am distressed that I was not born in Ġabal Al-Nusayr so that I would have the natural disposition/linguistic habit in the Arabic of Mudar (arabīyah mudar) without any burden or trouble. This with respect to understanding correct Arabic al-'arabīyah al-ṣaḥīḥah.' (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8]) [emphasis mine]

In this paragraph Al-Mumkin polemically refers to Dāǧir's statement that the students he used to teach in Ġabal Al-Nusayr understood him better when he was speaking al-faṣīḥah to them than when he would address them in Lebanese Arabic. Doing so, Al-Mumkin not only confirms his equation of lughat mudar with al-lughah al-faṣīḥah, in the following sentence he also indirectly equates 'arabīyah mudār' with 'correct Arabic.' As we saw above, this label was already used as a synonym for 'al-lughah al-faṣīḥah.'

In the following paragraph the anonymous H.H. also quotes Ibn Ḥaldān. This quotation is similar to the second quote by Al-Mumkin, but instead of 'al-līsān al-mudārī' he quotes 'al-līsān al-ḥadārī.'

'Ibn Ḥaldān stated that "The natural disposition of the urban language (malakat al-līsān al-ḥadārī) of this epoch is gone and got corrupted (dāhiba wa fasadat). The
language of this complete generation is different from the language of Mudar in which the Koran was revealed.” (H.H., 1882: 692 [7]) [emphasis mine]

Other references are:

‘Al-Ṣaft Al-Hilli only wrote in the language of Mudar (luḡat mudar) as his writings testify. If his opinion was that of the respected Al-Mumkin then he would have written in the language that was current in his epoch (al-luḡah al-šā‘i‘ah fi ‘ṣrīḥī).’ (H.H., 1882: 692 [7]) [emphasis mine]

And:

‘In contrast to when it is asked from him to replace [his language] with the Mudārī language (al-luḡah al-mudārīyah), of which he thinks that it is the noblest language (aṭraf al-luḡāt) and that it is one of the means for [obtaining] his happiness. (H.H., 1882: 693 [8]) [emphasis mine]

H.H. also further confirms the equation of ‘al-luḡah al-faṣṭah’ with ‘al-luḡah al-mudārīyah,’ by using it in opposition with ‘al-luḡah al-‘āmmīyah,’ in the same way as ‘al-luḡah al-‘āmmīyah’ was previously already contrasted with ‘the writing language’ and ‘al-luḡah al-faṣṭah.’ This is again a confirmation that the two terms were considered synonyms.

In this paragraph the religious connotation of the Mudārī language is the clearest, since it is further characterized as the noblest language.

Also in the following paragraph the term occurs:

‘I wished that he reported [also] about one of the scholars, from the moment of its corruption [of the folk language] until now, who shared the approval of the use of the folk language (al-luḡah al-‘āmmīyah) instead of the Mudārī language (al-luḡah al-mudārīyah) in writing and composition.’ (H.H., 1882: 694 [10]) [emphasis mine]

And:

‘Concerning his regret of not being born on Ġabal Nuṣayr in order to have the natural disposition/linguistic habit of the Arabic of Mudar (malakah bi-‘arabiyat Mudar) without effort and without problems […].’ (H.H., 1882: 694 [10]) [emphasis mine]

As we already mentioned, ‘luḡat mudar’ and its alternates were not current terms during the nineteenth century, and even in the debate the linguistic label does not occur often. It should not surprise us then that, in contrast with other terms (such as ‘al-luḡah al-‘āmmīyah’), it also did not become really current during the twentieth century.
Most twentieth-century dictionaries only refer to the tribe without referring to the language. The only exception is Wehr who gives ‘the language of Mūdar, the Arabic language’ (Wehr, 1980: 912). This means that it was not and did not become a very common reference for a language variety.

The original language: al-luğah al-‘aṣliyah

‘Al-luğah al-‘aṣliyah’ appears for the first time in the debate in the title ‘Naḡāh al-‘ummah al-‘arabiyah ft luğatihā al-‘aṣliyah’ (Success of the Arab ‘ummah in her original language), written by the Damascene Literary Society.

The adjective ‘‘aṣli’’ (here in its feminine form) is derived from the lexical root ‘š l’, meaning ‘root,’ ‘origin,’ or ‘source.’ ‘‘Aṣli’’ then can be translated as ‘original, primary, primal, initial; genuine, authentic, pure’ (Wehr, 1980: 19). The title then suggests that communities or nations have authentic/original languages and that (only?) its use as a national language guarantees national success.

The label reappears a few times in the same article:

‘[Even] if we presuppose its possibility [the unification of the folk languages], then it is [still] more adequate to return (‘irğā’uhā) them to the original language (al-luğah al-‘aṣliyah) […]’ (Society, 1882a: 553 [4]) [emphasis mine]

Here, it is suggested that al-faṣṭiḥah is the original, authentic language of which the folk languages are derived. This is sustained by the notion of ‘returning’ (‘irğā’) the folk languages to the authentic language.

The idea of ‘bringing back’ or ‘returning’ the folk languages to al-faṣṭiḥah was already suggested by Al-Yāzīḡī:‘then it is obvious that it is much better and easier to return the languages to al-luğah al-faṣṭiḥah (radd al-‘alsinah ‘ilā al-luğah al-faṣṭiḥah), since it has exhaustively treated grammatical rules (mustawfiyyat al-qawā‘id), an precise style (mustkamat al-uslūb) and extensive conventional rules (wāsī‘at al-‘awdā‘), which the folk languages (al-luğat al-‘āmmiyah) do not even approach. This is generally accepted.’ (Al-Yāzīḡī, 1881: 404 [2])

The Damascene Literary Society uses ‘al-luğah al-‘aṣliyah’ in opposition to ‘luğat al-‘āmmah’ in the same way as other authors use ‘al-luğah al-faṣṭiḥah,’ which again suggest that the Damascene Literary Society considers it a valid synonym for ‘al-luğah al-faṣṭiḥah.’

Concerning Al-Mumkin’s argument that the benefits that result from using the folk language (luğat al-‘āmmah) [for written purpose] outdo the benefits of preserving the original language (al-luğah al-‘aṣliyah), because of the absence of Arabic books
that can be used for industry, agriculture, commerce and modern sciences, except for [the books] that were translated recently and that the majority of [the books] in the Arabic language that are used are just some books on the basic principles of mathematics, and some history books, and religion, jurisprudence and language books: It comprises false claims.' (Society, 1882a: 555 [8])

And:

'[...] the method to achieve this is to translate them to the original language (al-
luğah al-'asliyah) [...]’ (Society, 1882a: 555 [9])

And:

'[...] the damage that is caused by abandoning the original language (al-luğah al-
'asliyah) [...]’ (Society, 1882a: 556 [10])

And:

'Al-Şayh 'Alā’ al-Dīn Efendī started to write a book that facilitates the folk people
(al-'awwām) to replace their language with the original language (al-luğah al-
'asliyah)’ (Society, 1882a: 556 [11])

Also Qandalaft refers to ‘al-luğah al-'asliyah,’ but this time in a reference to the
European situation:

'[...] such as the invasion of Northern European tribes (qabā’il šīmālī ʿarabā) against the Romans (al-rūmāniyān) and their mixing with them (iḥtilāḥhum bi-him).
So their original language [became] corrupted among the folk people and it became a mixture of different languages (bi-hayt 'afṣada al-luğah al-'asliyah 'inda al-
'āmmah fa-uṣbāḥat maṣāqal min luğat muṣṭalifah) which is hard to decompose and of which the roots are hard to diffuse/generalize. But our language (luğatunā) was not overcome by what happened to these [languages], thank God, and it did not arrive to this bad situation.’ (Qandalaft, 1882a: 696 [6])

In this paragraph Qandalaft suggests that there exist authentic, original root languages. However, these languages can become corrupted (afṣada) if the speakers of these languages mix with speakers of other languages. The languages then also become mixed. In his opinion Latin cannot be purified anymore of these foreign influences, so it cannot be restored to its original form, its roots (uṣāl).

Arabic and Greek however can be brought back to their roots, and this ‘purified original language’ can be (anew) generally diffused.
Conclusions

In this section I paid particular attention to the linguistic labels used in the debate. This is important, for one thing, in order to retrace developments in linguistic language use, especially the re-semanticization of already existing lexical items.

We noticed that the linguistic terminology in the debate itself was in a state of flux, and that often it can be situated somewhere in the middle between classical and modern twentieth-century language use.

By analyzing direct and indirect equations of linguistic labels, it is possible to uncover attitudes toward and implicit evaluations of the linguistic varieties that are described by these labels. I tried to demonstrate, for instance, how ‘luğat al-kitābah’ (the writing language) was, directly or indirectly, equated with ‘al-luğah al-faṣīḥah’ or ‘al-luğah al-fuṣḥā.’ These labels were again associated or equated with ‘al-luğah al-qadīmah’ (the ancient language), ‘al-arabiyyah al-sāḥīḥah’ (correct Arabic) or ‘al-luğah al-sāḥīḥah’ (the correct language), ‘al-luğah al-‘aṣlīyyah’ (the original language), and ‘luğat mudar’ (the language of Mudar).

Since these equations and associations occur consistently throughout the debate and are never contested, we can conclude that they were generally accepted by the participants in the debate.

However, even if the above-mentioned linguistic labels are used as synonyms and even in an unmarked way, they evoke very different associations and connotations, which we discussed in detail. Because of the fact that they are used as synonyms, the connotations and associations of one linguistic label are somehow transferred to the other labels. Thus clusters of associations arise.

The writing language is then associated with eloquence, by equating it to al-luğah al-faṣīḥah or al-fuṣḥā, but also with correctness, an ancient history, originality and authenticity and the language of the confederation of tribes of which also the Qurayš (the tribe to which the Prophet Muhammad belonged), by respectively equating it with ‘al-luğah al-sāḥīḥah, ‘al-luğah al-qadīmah,’ ‘al-luğah al-‘aṣlīyyah,’ and ‘luğat mudar.’

In the same way, ‘luğat al-takallum’ (the speaking language) was equated with ‘luğat al-‘āmmah’ (the language of the common folk), a term which was used alternately with ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ (the folk language). In that way, a label that basically refers to the medium in which the language is used, receives a social connotation by equating it with a label that explicitly refers to social categories. A further equation is that with ‘al-luğah al-šā‘ī‘ah’ (the current language). Moreover, the spoken language is described as a language that is naturally acquired by the reference ‘the Arabic which we sucked with the mother milk’ (al-arabiyyah ala‘ṯāṣa‘nara‘dā‘uhāma‘alal-labān). The cluster of meanings and associations is than one of a variety that is spoken, mostly by the common people (and not so much by the elite), the use of which is widespread and which is acquired in a natural and effortless way.
I were only able uncover these clusters of associations and connotations, which we can consider as implicit evaluations and attitudes of the participants toward the linguistic varieties they describe, by closely analyzing the linguistic terminology they use.

What is striking is that all participants use these linguistic labels, which means that despite the fact that they take different and opposing positions in the debate, they somehow share many linguistic attitudes. For instance, despite the fact that he 'defends' \textit{al-luğah al-‘āmmīyāh}, Al-Mumkin, when referring to \textit{al-luğah al-faṣīḥah}, also uses the label \textit{al-luğah al-ṣaḥīḥah} (the correct language), even though this label indirectly implies the 'incorrectness' of \textit{al-luğah al-‘āmmīyāh}.

In that way, he implicitly undermines his own position.

In the following section I will further investigate these evaluations and attitudes, by analyzing how the participants describe the linguistic varieties.
THE PERCEPTION OF LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCE

Introduction
As we already mentioned and illustrated in Chapter 1, the perception of linguistic difference always overrules strictly linguistic criteria. Depending on the point one tries to make, linguistic differences can be either stressed or downplayed. As we will see, this is also the case in the debate we are presently dealing with.

In this section I will pay attention to the ways in which the differences between al-faṣīḥah and al-ʿāmmīyah are presented by the debaters and the ways in which these differences are strategically employed in order to sustain their positions in the debate. The perception of linguistic difference is related to (or triggered by) the observation that the ʿāmmah are not able to understand texts written in al-faṣīḥah. The debaters try to deal with the question to what extent the ʿāmmah understand or do not understand written faṣīḥah texts, as well as with the parameters for the comprehensibility of written texts.

While most of the debaters try to minimize the difference between al-luğah al-faṣīḥah and al-luğah al-ʿāmmīyah, others stress this difference. As we will see, the minimization or accentuation of the difference between al-faṣīḥah and al-ʿāmmīyah is used by the participants as evidence for the positions on the use of al-faṣīḥah or of al-ʿāmmīyah as a written language.

Apart from their observations of the relative difference between al-faṣīḥah and al-ʿāmmīyah, the debaters also provide evaluations of the characteristics of both varieties. As we will see these characteristics are also used as arguments in favor of or against the use of one or the other variety as a written language.

Finally, I will examine the perception of the internal unity of al-faṣīḥah and the diversity of al-ʿāmmīyah. Even though the debaters admit at least indirectly a certain degree of variability within al-faṣīḥah, they basically conceive of it as one variety with a large degree of internal unity. Most of the debaters strategically contrast this unity with the diversity and disunion of the folk languages. We will see that al-luğah al-ʿāmmīyah is used as a collective name for several luğāt ʿāmmīyah (pl. of luğah ʿāmmiyah), of which on the one hand the diversity and disunion is stressed as an argument against its use as a written language, but which is, on the other hand, seen as a collective with the shared characteristic of not being al-faṣīḥah.

All these issues will be further examined in detail in the subsequent sections.

To begin with, we have to remember that the debate was triggered by the observation made by Ṣarrāf and Nimr that the difference between the written and spoken language in Arabic is much larger than is the case for European languages.

'This is because the book language of the Westerners is not very different from the language they speak. So a commoner (ʿāmmiy) among them understands a
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philosophy book just [in the same way] as the commoner among us understands the story of Bani Hilal.¹⁶ […]

But concerning us, the speakers of Arabic, our books, and especially our science books, are written in a language different from the language we speak. The distance between both is as the distance between French and English or, more precisely, as the difference between Latin and Italian. Therefore, our common people are not able to understand the meanings of books if they did not study their language and acquired its mastery.’ (Sarrūf & Nīmr, 1881: 352-353 [1-2])

Apart from the comparison between the linguistic situation in the West and that in the Arab world, (which we dealt with in the previous chapter), this paragraph actually contains two observations which are, as we will see, closely intertwined in this debate. The first observation is the difference between the spoken and the written language and the second is that, because of this, the Arab folk people (‘āmmah) are not able to understand written (scientific) texts. The first observation thus functions as an explanation for the second.

As was already mentioned, these two issues receive a lot of attention in the debate. The participants discuss largely whether or not it is the difference between the written and the spoken language that is the cause of the fact that the ‘āmmah do not understand written texts. This discussion then also leads to another related one, namely about the question: what is real faṣāḥah (eloquence).

Limited empirical basis

Before we go into these topics, we have to deal with the issue of empirical evidence. On what kind of linguistic data do the debaters base their conclusions? It is striking that both the discussion concerning whether the ‘āmmah are able to understand written texts and the one about the difference between the written and the spoken language, or al-luqāḥ al-fasāḥah and al-luqāḥ al-‘āmmīyah, have a very limited empirical basis. During the debate a few personal experiences are recounted and used as ‘proof.’ However, they do not exceed the anecdotal level.

For instance, Al-Mumkin relates that

‘often I used to read our books to some industrial workers and they did not understand well what I did not explain to them in the folk language (luqāt al-‘āmmah).’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [1])

¹⁶ Bani Hilal is a famous tribe of the Arabian Peninsula that migrated via Egypt to the Maghrib. They were known as ferocious and heroic warriors. The epic of the Bani Hilal is one of the most famous folk stories in the Arab world and was one of the first objects of study in the science of folklore.
Also Dāgir bases some his opinions on his personal experiences in Ğabal al-Nusayrīyah, where he worked as a teacher. In the beginning he did not understand the dialect of his pupils and they did not understand him, and he felt like a ‘stammering barbarian’ (‘a’ğam ṭamṭam). As appears from the quote, which will be further analyzed below, Dāgir’s narration does not surpass the level of the anecdote.

‘Although I went to one of the villages of this mountain as a teacher for the children, I was obliged to spend a lot of time learning their vernacular/dialect (luḥgatuḥum) and their conventional language use (iṣṭilāḥ kalāmīhi), since I felt to be a stammering barbarian among them. I did not understand and was not understood. As such, three months passed until I was able to express myself fluently in conversation with them. If not for limited space, I would have liked to mention something of their strange colloquial words (‘al-faṣīḥum al-‘āmmiyah al-ǧarīḥah) and their obscure expressions (‘ibārātuhum al-ǧāmīdah). What is more appropriate for me to mention here is that they understood me much better when I read to them something from religious, historical or literary books, than when I told them something in my folk language (luğat al-‘āmmiyah). Every time when I arrived to a sentence that was difficult for them, I always started to explain it in my folk language increasing the difficulty and obscurity for them.’ (Dāgir, 1882: 557 [4-5])

Moreover, limited empirical evidence also means that the debaters do not give concrete examples of linguistic differences between al-luğah al-faṣīḥah and al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah: their observations remain at the level of rather general impressions about these differences. This is also illustrated by the examples cited above.

What is interesting for our purposes is that, because of the lack of concrete empirical evidence, the authors can easily draw very different conclusions concerning the difference between al-luğah al-faṣīḥah and al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah. In general, depending on their stance in the debate, they try to stress or downplay the difference.

The interrelation between the issues of comprehensibility, the difference between al-faṣīḥah and al-‘āmmiyah and eloquence (faṣāḥah)

Since the perception of linguistic difference is mainly based on the degree to which the ‘āmmah are able to understand al-faṣīḥah, a lot of attention is paid to the extent to which the ‘āmmah are able to understand al-faṣīḥah, as well as to the reason(s) why al-faṣīḥah is hard to understand for them or not. This question of comprehensibility then leads to a discussion about what real eloquence (faṣāḥah-balāgah) is. As such the issues of comprehensibility, eloquence, and the perception of linguistic difference are strongly interrelated. This is illustrated in Al-Yaṣiğ’s article.
Al-Yâziğî opens his article with a summary and evaluation of the proposals made by Şarrâf and Nimr, in which he takes a very clear position in favor of maintaining al-fâṣīḥah as a writing language.

'Concerning the first option, namely the replacement of our language with another language: it is generally known that it is of no advantage for the mentioned âṣm, if this replacement does not comprise the spoken language as well. And this is completely impossible. Concerning the second method, the least that it contains is the destruction of the complete edifice of the Arabic writings and the loss of a lot of the labor of the predeceessors and subsequently the burden of [spending the same labor] in the future. Moreover, if we approved of this opinion and intended [to apply it]: which language of the folk languages would we use, since between each of these languages and its sister there is a difference qua pronunciation (lahğah) and conventions ('awdâ'), which is at least as large as the difference between each of them and al-lugah al-fâṣâhah. So, whichever of these languages we choose to write in, it will take us to what we flee from. As such, in the frame of this pursuit, it is necessary to transform all the languages of the region/lands (bîlād) to one language (lugah wâhidah). If this is so, then it is obvious that it is much better and easier to return the languages to al-lugah al-fâṣâhah, since it has exhaustively treated grammatical rules (mustawfîyat al-qawâ'id), a precise style (mutkamat al-'usûb) and extensive constructions/grammatical rules (wâsî'at al-'awdâ'), which the folk languages do not even approach. This is generally accepted. This is the substance of the third opinion that was mentioned above. It is the most feasible in comparison to the first two methods, even though it is in itself almost unfeasible.' (Al-Yâziğî, 1881: 404 [2])

After summarizing and discussing these three proposals Al-Yâziğî sets out to further enhance his position (namely the necessity of maintaining al-fâṣâhah as a writing language), by turning to the question of the comprehensibility of written texts.

First of all, he observes that the problem of the lack of understanding of (scientific) written texts is not due to the inherent characteristics of the writing language, but rather to the language users of al-fâṣâhah.

'What is taken in consideration here is that the barrier between language and [the understanding of] meaning is not on the part of the language, but rather on the part of the language users. [...] It is that most writers these days are infatuated with ornamental expressions (ummâq al-`ibârât), they plunge themselves in the choice of strange words (al-`garîb) and the stuffing of their speech with metaphors, paronomasia, erudite orientations, and so on.' (Al-Yâziğî, 1881: 404 [3])

Because of this, the meaning of a text is, in his opinion, completely lost to rhetorical and stylistic devices overused by the writers in al-fâṣâhah. This observation leads him to the question what real eloquence (balâgâh) is. He answers
this question with the observations of the earlier philologists (which he does not mention by name).

'What we mentioned explains their statement\(^\text{17}\) that eloquence (\textit{al-balāğah}) is the adaptation of language use (\textit{kala\'am}) according to the context (\textit{mutābāqat al-kala\'am lī-muqtadā al-hāl}). By this is meant the situation of the addressed (\textit{ḥāl al-muḥācosa}), depending on his degree of intelligence or stupidity \([!]\) of the addressed, his knowledge or ignorance, and so on. So, everyone should be addressed depending on his situation and for every context [an appropriate] language has to be made (\textit{wa yuğ'al li-kull maqām maqāāl}).' (\textit{Al-Yāzi\'i}, 1881: 405 [4])

\textit{Al-Yāzi\'i} thus relates the comprehensibility of texts clearly to the writers’ adaptation of language use to the addressed. This means that texts that are written for a general reading public, by which in this context a reading public consisting of both ḥāṣṣah and ‘āmmah is meant, should be adapted in such a way that both ḥāṣṣah and ‘āmmah are able to understand them. As mentioned before, despite the modernity of the suggestion of the adaptability of language use, such a statement keeps the social division between ḥāṣṣah and ‘āmmah firmly intact. Not least because \textit{Al-Yāzi\'i} does not seem to bother about the fact that certain text genres will always be beyond reach for the ‘āmmah:

'Language use that is specifically intended to be addressed to the ḥāṣṣah and which is not suitable for the ‘āmmah is anyway very rare. In my opinion it should be limited to \textit{maqāmāt} and poetry, since they [these genres] cannot do without elegant and amazing language, and some specific aims of the writer which are not intended for a general reading public.' (\textit{Al-Yāzi\'i}, 1881: 405 [4])

Apart from these texts 'for special purposes,' the ‘āmmah should always be the first to be taken into consideration. \textit{Al-Yāzi\'i} also mentions how this can be achieved.

'First of all, one has to turn to the facilitation of meaning, the choice of the clearest words and the simplest structures so that language use has a clear meaning that can be easily understood. Subsequently, one has to turn to the refinement and correction of the expression so that it does not become void of meaning and that it does not obscure the already mentioned clarity, so that the language use is in accordance with

\(^{17}\) \textit{Al-Yāzi\'i} does not specify whom he refers to with ‘their.’ We assume that he refers to earlier (medieval) philologists. It occurs often in this debate that the participants refer to writers and poets, that they quote from earlier (often medieval works) without precisely mentioning the complete name of the author or the title of the work they refer to. This is largely because the authors assume that their readers know these authors and their works. It surely enhances the elitist character of the debate.
The perception of linguistic difference

the statement of some of them. It was asked: What is eloquence (balāgah)? And he said: It is what [the language use] the ‘āmmah understand and what the ḥāṣṣah approve of.’ (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 405 [4])

Al-Yāziği further argues that the Arabic language is so rich qua expressions that it is easy ‘to convey a meaning that is addressed to the most eloquent of the ḥāṣṣah and the most ignorant of the ‘āmmah, without abandoning anything of it’ (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 405). Al-Yāziği then proceeds to give concrete examples of such simple but correct language use.

‘We are spared from giving further examples by what everyone of us sees and hears during nights that are animated until dawn by the reading of Arabic stories, such as the story ‘Antarah and the book of Thousand and one nights, and some stories translated from Western languages. They are al-faṣīḥah qua expression (kulluhā faṣīḥat al-‘ibārah), meaning that they are in no way folk language (bi-ma‘nā ‘inmahā laysat min luğat al-‘āmmah fi šayy‘), except for a few slips of the pen [on behalf] of the writers. Nevertheless, they are understood by the listeners, even if they are from the most ignorant masses. They crowd to hear them [the stories], they memorize them and pass their events on, as is generally known. This is because the folk language (luğat al-‘āmmah) generally does not differ from al-faṣīḥ only on the level of inflection (‘i‘rāb), and this does not hamper comprehension. What hinders comprehension are strange words (garīb) or [those words] that are strange for them [al-‘āmmah]. For most [strange words] there exist synonyms in their language (lisānūhum) that are [at the same time] faṣīḥ. If a writer is sometimes compelled to insert something of these strange words (garīb) in his language use (kalām), it can be clarified by adding an argument or commentary, or by inserting a word or a phrase. Anyway, this occurs rarely.’ (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 405 [5])

What Al-Yāziği tries to do in this article is to divert the focus away from the difference between the written and the spoken language, which was introduced by Šarrāf and Nimr, an towards a general discussion about the comprehensibility of written texts. In his opinion, the lack of understanding by the ‘āmmah of these written faṣīḥah texts is not due to the language variety (al-faṣīḥah) in which these texts are written, but rather to the fact that authors are not able to adapt their language use to their reading public.

He further argues that real eloquence (balāgah) is not characterized by the use of difficult or strange words, but rather by the criterion of comprehensibility. To him, language use is eloquent when its target public understands it. However, simplifying language use still has to remain within the general framework of

\[18\] See previous footnote.

\[19\] See previous footnote.
correctness. This correctness is determined by the ḥāṣṣah, who remain the prescribers of linguistic correctness (see also our discussion about social stratification in Chapter 3), as exemplified in the quote: ‘eloquent language use is that what the ‘āmmah understand and what the ḥāṣṣah approve of.’

Thus, to Al-Yāzīġī, eloquent language use is characterized by a good balance between correctness and comprehensibility.

In conclusion we can say that, in Al-Yāzīġī’s opinion, the difference between the written and the spoken language is not the cause of the fact that the ‘āmmah do not understand written fasīḥah texts. Moreover, Al-Yāzīġī tries to minimize this linguistic difference, reducing it to the presence or the absence of inflection (‘i'rāb), which is said not to hinder comprehension.

However, we have to remain aware of the fact that the main reason why Al-Yāzīġī built up this argumentation is in order to sustain his position in favor of maintaining al-fasīḥah as the writing language, as he stated at the beginning of the article.

I will now investigate each of the themes that were introduced by Al-Yāzīġī in detail and compare the opinions of the other debaters, as well as the ways in which these themes are strategically developed by the debaters in order to defend their positions in the debate. Repeating them for the sake of clarity, these issues are the comprehensibility of written texts, the perception of difference between written and spoken language, the inherent qualities of linguistic varieties and the perception of the unity of al-fasīḥah versus the diversity or disunion of the folk languages.

_Do the ‘āmmah understand texts written in al-fasīḥah or not? And why?_

We concluded that Al-Yāzīġī diverted the issue of the lack of comprehension of written texts by the ‘āmmah away from the choice of language variety, namely al-fasīḥah, and towards the way in which this variety is used by writers. He did this by stressing the fact that the comprehension problem arises from the ways in which al-fasīḥah is used by authors. In this way he defended his position that al-fasīḥah must remain the written language.

All the other debaters, with the exception of Al-Mumkin, defend the same position that al-luğah al-fasīḥah must remain the written language, though most of them acknowledge that al-fasīḥah needs some adaptations. However, since they cannot deny that the ‘āmmah indeed have problems understanding texts written in al-fasīḥah, they, as is the case for Al-Yāzīġī, are at pains to find causes, other than the difference between al-fasīḥah and al-‘āmmihāh for this lack of understanding.

In addition to the causes mentioned by Al-Yāzīġī, the fact that a reader needs some (scientific) background information in order to be able to understand a scientific text (The Damascene Literary Society) and the bad writing style and
organization of texts (Qandalaft) are discussed as possible causes for the lack of understanding by the ‘āmmah.

The Damascene Literary Society is convinced that the ‘āmmah can easily understand al-luğah al-faṣīḥah if obsolete language use is avoided. They even claim that if a text were written in al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah it would be harder to understand than one written in al-faṣīḥah.

‘[This] together with [the fact] that the commoners understand it easily if strange words are avoided (suḥālat al-fāh m ‘alā al-‘āwām min al-ḥāṣ min al-kalām). Moreover, what is written in the folk language is hard to understand. If it is written in the same way as it is pronounced, it would be more similar to the language of the Circassians or the Albanians. One of the superior writers wrote once a story in their language (lughatuhum) and it was difficult to read and understand for both the elite (al-ḥāṣ) and the common people (al- ‘ām). If we would not fear to elaborate too much, we would relate it here.’ (Society, 1881a: 553 [4])

After this, the Society gives another suggestion concerning the lack of understanding:

‘We say that the fact that the commoners (‘awwām) do not understand scientific books written in Arabic is not due to the fact that they do not understand their vocabulary. If this were the case then everybody who masters the Arabic language should easily be able to read on the sciences written down in Arabic, and this is not the case. If the expert of [the Arabic language] studied the easiest engineering book, optics, arithmetics or algebra, it would not be easy for him to understand, unless he has experience in the discipline and if he studied the terminology of the discipline (muṣṭalahāt al-fann). This is in our opinion something two persons would not disagree about. And this is not because of the non-understanding of vocabulary, or the syntactic structures, or the terminology of specialists of the field, when we would assume knowledge thereof, but rather because it [understanding] depends on theoretical things, of which the understanding depends on instruction. If not, somebody who knows French, in which the language of speech and the writing language are in agreement, can, if he wishes, study all the scientific fields and all branches of industry written in [French], simply because of his knowledge of the language. As such, the French government/state and similar governments/states then have to close their schools and content themselves with the spread scientific, technical and industrial books. With this [measure], they will not need to spend enormous amounts of gold and silver.’ (Society, 1882: 553-4 [5])

20 The original Arabic text mentions ‘al-ḥābir fi-hā’, which is probably a printing mistake for ‘al-ḥabir fi-hā’ (the expert in it).
Thus, the Society is convinced that even if language use is taken into account, there is another factor that impedes a good understanding of scientific texts. The comprehension of scientific texts not only requires a good knowledge of the language (variety) in which they are written, but also a certain degree of specific background knowledge related to the scientific field. This knowledge can only be acquired by the explanation of a teacher or professor.

This opinion is not completely accepted by Qandalaft, who is rather convinced that the solution for the lack of understanding is a good writing style. He reacts to Al-Mumkin’s opinion as well as the opinion of the Society, in his opinion the lack of understanding is not due to the inherent qualities of the language (Al-Mumkin’s claim) and also not to a lack of general scientific background (the Society’s claim), but rather the lack of a good writing style (‘uslāb). This style consists of elements which Al-Yāziḡī mentioned already, namely, ‘selecting [the pure words out of] the current/colloquial words (bi-‘intiqā’ al-mutadāwal min al-‘alfāz) and the use of familiar expressions (‘isti’māl al-ma’nās min at-ta’bīr). However, Qandalaft adds some new elements, namely, a good division (‘iǧādat al-ta qsīm), presentation in a logical order (tafsīl), explanation (bast) and clarification (‘idāḥ):

‘the lack of understanding by the common people (‘āmmah) of these books does not result from the essence of language (dā‘ al-luḡah), but rather from the lack of a writing style (naqs ‘uslāb al-ta’lif). Together with many of our sirs, the excellent researchers among the Arabs and non-Arabs, we believe that if this style was taken as a rule in our scientific and industrial books, by selecting the current words (bi-‘intiqā’ al-mutadāwal min al-‘alfāz) and using familiar expressions (‘isti’māl al-ma’nās min at-ta’bīr), by a good division (‘iǧādat al-ta qsīm), presentation in a logical order (tafsīl), explanation (bast) and clarification (‘idāḥ) [...]’ (Qandalaft, 1882a: 695 [4])

Good examples of such a writing style, then, are ‘the books of the Westerners,’ ‘Al-Muqtatāf’ and ‘recently written Arabic books.’ Qandalaft suggests that the comprehensibility of texts would be enhanced by a

‘good natural ordering of scientific reports, by putting limits, introductions, terminology, and by the systematic arrangement into chapters, the analysis of the

21 The Arabic phrase ‘bi-‘intiqā’ al-mutadāwal min al-‘alfāz’ can lead to different interpretations. ‘Mutadāwal’ can mean both ‘current, circulating, prevailing, in common use’ and by extension ‘kalām mutadāwal’ can be translated as ‘colloquial use.’ (Wehr, 1980: 302) As such, it is not clear whether Qandalaft means by ‘al-mutadāwal min al-‘alfāz’, faṣīḥah words that are very currently used (so that also the ‘āmmah can understand them), or colloquial words that can be ‘elevated’ or ‘purified’ (‘intiqā’ is derived from the root n-q-y, which means pure).
problem, the clarification of the abstruse, the explanation of the expression and so on.' (Qandalaft, 1882a: 695 [4])

Qandalaft also repeats this opinion in his second article, stressing again that 'the difference between the book language (luqat al-kitâb) and the folk language (luqat al-'âmmâh)' is of very little importance for, and actually does not in itself hinder, a good understanding of texts (Qandalaft, 1882b: 108 [4]).

However, even the non-understanding by the 'âmmâh, which most of the debaters seem to agree on, is downplayed by Dâgîr. This appears from the paragraph we quoted above from Dâgîr's article, in which he states that his pupils understood him better when he read religious, historical and literary texts (which are written in al-faṣīḥâh) in comparison to when he spoke to them in his own vernacular. In the same article, he also argues that they understood classical poetry better than poetry in the Lebanese folk language.

Even though no concrete empirical data are given, this experience is enough for Dâgîr to conclude that the mutual difference between the different folk languages is much larger than the difference between each separate folk language and al-faṣīḥâh:

'The conclusion is that their language is closer to al-faṣīḥâh than it is to other folk languages. Compare this province to the other provinces of Syria. And compare with Syria, Iraq, the Maghrib, Egypt and other [regions].' (Dâgîr, 1882: 557 [5])

This conclusion brings us to the second issue, namely the perception of the difference between al-luqâh al-faṣīḥâh and al-luqâh al-'âmmîyâh.

The perception of the difference between al-faṣīḥâh and al-'âmmîyâh

Al-Mumkin, who is the only defender of the standardization of al-luqâh al-'âmmîyâh and its promotion from written to oral functions, is convinced that the 'âmmâh are not able to understand scientific texts the way they should. This is based on his personal experiences, namely that the 'âmmâh were not able to understand the scientific texts he used to read to them.

However, in contrast to the other debaters, Al-Mumkin is convinced that this lack of understanding is due to the difference between written and spoken language. Thus he rejects Al-Yâziği's argument that the 'âmmâh are able to understand scientific texts language-wise (on condition that lexical oddities are avoided), but not content-wise. He also disputes Al-Yâziği's argument that the 'âmmâh are able to understand the story of 'Antarâh in the same way as they should be able to understand scientific texts. He argues that they indeed do understand the story, but only the general plot line and not all its details.
"If you would ask them the meaning of each single word, or rather the meaning of every single expression, you would notice that their understanding is not more than a dim reflection that approaches or moves away from reality depending on the nearness or the distance from the words to the folk language (luğat al-‘ammah)." (Al-Munkin, 1882a: 494 [1])

He further develops this idea in his second article, in which he reacts against the Society's argument that the lack of understanding of the ‘āmmah is not due to language. He states:

"Even though I did not limit the books to scientific [books] and I did not intend scientific books, I do not see in the reaction something that proves that the industrial workers would not understand science books better if they were written in the folk language. I ask the respected Literary Society and all the righteous people: 'what would you say if we wrote a book on tanning in the folk language and we wrote the same book in al-luğah al-faṣīḥah? Which one of both would the laborers understand better?' If it is the first, then my statement is confirmed. If it is the second, then there is no need for the book that the intelligent Al-Ḥāṭib promised us. And not for the second book for the revivification of al-luğah al-faṣīḥah that the respected president of the Benevolent Society to which the literary correspondent of Al-‘Ahrām referred, started with." (Al-Munkin, 1882b: 619 [3])

The idea that the ‘āmmah would be able to understand written texts better if they were written in the folk language is his main argument in favor of standardizing al-luğah al-‘āmmīyah in such a way as to turn it into the written language.

Al-Munkin also illustrates his claim that the lack of comprehensibility is due to the language by means of a personal anecdote, in which he acknowledges the fact that despite his thorough study of al-faṣīḥah he had difficulties reading an ancient book written in it:

"And I, may God be my witness, I studied Arabic from the greatest masters in Arabic and I studied what God bestowed on me of his benevolence from the sciences on language and other sciences. Yesterday I was reading an ancient book and I became very tired before I understood the meaning of one of its chapters. Not because of the strangeness of its subject, because it was very basic for me, but rather because of the strange way of expression in the book and because of its distance from our familiar books." (Al-Munkin, 1882b: 620 [8])

Moreover, Al-Munkin stresses that the difference between al-luğah al-‘āmmīyah and al-luğah al-faṣīḥah is as large as the difference between two completely different languages. He further sustains his argument by claiming that Al-Muqtataf

\[\text{\footnotesize 22 Quotation marks mine.}\]
(Ṣarrāf and Nimr), Ibn Ḥaldān and the Charity Society (which had the intention of publishing a book that would help the ‘āmmah to acquire al-faṣīḥah) share his opinion (at least indirectly).

‘Your Benevolent Society, the founders of Al-Muqtaṣaf and the great scholar Ibn Ḥaldān before them believe from with heart that the language that we speak in this epoch is “an independent language, different from the language of Muṣṭar,” meaning (‘aṣir) al-‘ārabiyah al-faṣīḥah. It has been like this since hundreds of years. Even if [the spoken languages] differed from town to town, they are sufficient “to render the intended meaning and to express what is in the mind, and that is the meaning of ‘al-lisan’ or ‘al-luqāh’ (language). The loss of inflection (‘i’rāb) in it is not harmful.”24 And “The natural disposition of the Muṣṭar language (al-lisan al-Muṣṭari) of this epoch has disappeared and became corrupted. The language of this complete generation (luqat hādā al-ṣayl kullihim) is different from the language of Muṣṭar (luqat muṣṭar) in which the Koran was revealed.”25 (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8])

By quoting the work of the great historian Ibn Ḥaldān (1332-1406) he also makes his point that the difference between the spoken and the written language, the folk languages and al-faṣīḥah, has already been a fact for hundreds of years. In this way he not only gives weight to his opinion by quoting an authority, Ibn Ḥaldān, but he also shows that the linguistic problem they are presently discussing in the debate is not a new one.

Summarizing, we can say that Al-Mumkin stresses the difference between the spoken and the written language in order to sustain his position in favor of the standardization of the spoken language and its use as a written language.

As we will see, the other debaters try to downplay this difference, but only when it comes to defending the position that it will not be so hard to replace the spoken language by the written.

We already saw that also Ṣarrāf and Nimr considered this difference as the main cause of the fact that the ‘āmmah are not able to read and understand books written in ‘the written language,’ which in itself was seen to hinder general progress in the Arab world.

This observation is refuted by most of the other participants, with the exception of Al-Mumkin. However, Ṣarrāf and Nimr are never directly attacked for stressing the gap between the spoken and the written language, while Al-Mumkin is.

23 Quotation marks original.
24 Quotation marks original.
25 Quotation marks original.
In his reaction to the article by Ṣarrāf and Nimr, Al-Yāziği states that stories,

'such as the story 'Antarah and the book of Thousand and one nights, and some stories translated from Western languages [...] are all eloquent qua expression (kulluhā fasūḥat al-'ibārah), meaning that they are in no way folk language (bi-ma'na 'innahā laysat min luqat al-'ammah fi šay')", except for a few slips of the pen of [behalf of] the writers. Nevertheless, they are understood by the listeners, even if they are from the most ignorant masses. They crowd to hear them [the stories], they memorize them and pass their events on, as is generally known. This is because the folk language (luqat al-'ammah) generally does not differ from al-fasīh, only on the level of inflection ('i'rāb), and this does not hamper comprehension. What hinders comprehension are strange words (qarīb) or [those words] that are strange for them [al-'ammah]. For most [strange words] there exist synonyms in their language (lisānuhum) that are [at the same time] fasīh. If a writer is sometimes compelled to insert something of these strange words (qarīb) in his language use (kalām), it can be clarified by adding an argument or commentary, or by inserting a word or a phrase. Anyway, this occurs rarely.' (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 405 [5])

In this paragraph Al-Yāziği does two things. In the first place he creates a very strict opposition between al-uluqah al-fasīthah and al-uluqah al-'ammīyah by means of his negative definition of al-fasīthah: 'they are all of eloquent expression (fasūḥat al-'ibārah), meaning that they do not contain any folk language.' In other words all language use that is not folk language is fasīh.

On the other hand Al-Yāziği minimizes this opposition by downplaying the difference between these varieties, which he strictly separated, by stating that the main difference between al-fasīthah and al-uluqah al-'ammīyah is 'i'rāb (inflection). The fact that al-fasīthah has inflection, and al-uluqah al-'ammīyah does not, does in his opinion not hinder comprehension.

As we have seen above, Al-Yāziği refers to the use of strange and obsolete words in order to explain the general observation that the 'āmmah do not understand (well) texts written in al-fasīthah. His solution, then, was the simplification of written language use whenever the 'āmmah are the target public.

Al-Yāziği views the epic story of 'Antarah and the stories of Thousand and one nights as examples of 'language use that is simple but correct'. However, these examples deserve some further investigation.

Both examples (which are both collections of stories) were originally orally transmitted before being written down. Because of their original oral character they inevitably contain elements of al-uluqah al-'ammīyah, and probably the language use also differed from performance to performance (depending on contextual factors, the public, the performer and so on.) Versteegh has suggested that when the stories were written down, they underwent a standardizing process,
meaning that many non-\( \text{faṣīḥah} \) elements were ‘corrected’ toward the written norm. (Versteegh, 1997: 119)

A version of the story of ‘Thousand and one nights’ was printed on the \( \text{Bulaq} \) presses in Egypt already earlier in the nineteenth century. It is very likely then that \( \text{Al-Yāziği} \) based his linguistic conclusions on such a ‘cleaned’ version of the stories.

What is even more important for our purposes, however, is that the story collections (even the written versions) contain linguistic elements of which some can be considered \( \text{faṣīḥah} \) and others non-\( \text{faṣīḥah} \). When one tries to decide in which variety the texts as a whole have been written or performed, one can stress or downplay respectively the \( \text{faṣīḥah} \) or the non-\( \text{faṣīḥah} \) elements in the text, thus changing the evaluation of the overall character of the text. This evaluation then does not only depend on linguistic criteria (such as, for instance, a quantitative survey of \( \text{faṣīḥah} \) and non-\( \text{faṣīḥah} \) elements), but also on how ‘purist’ the evaluator is, or in other words on his language attitudes.

\( \text{Al-Yāziği} \) obviously considers the texts in general ‘\( \text{faṣīḥah} \),’ dismissing deviating elements as ‘slips of the pen.’ This serves his argument that altogether the difference between \( \text{al-} \text{faṣīḥah} \) and \( \text{al-} \text{luḡah } \text{al-} \text{‘ammīyāh} \) should not be exaggerated, and that the comprehension difficulties of the \( \text{‘ammāh} \) are not caused by the choice of \( \text{al-} \text{faṣīḥah} \) as a writing language, but rather by the way in which it is written. This then serves his argument that \( \text{al-} \text{faṣīḥah} \) should remain the written language.

The same point, namely that the \( \text{‘ammīh} \) can understand \( \text{al-} \text{faṣīḥah} \) if only lexical oddities are avoided, is also made by the Damascene Literary Society.

The Society resolutely prefers the third solution:

‘[...] then taking recourse to the third method is more adequate, because it is easier to achieve, since many words will remain the same and morphology and syntax will not be changed in most cases, as is generally known.’ (Society, 1882: 553 [3])

Here the Society suggests that the difference between \( \text{al-} \text{luḡah } \text{al-} \text{‘ammīyāh} \) and \( \text{al-} \text{luḡah } \text{al-} \text{faṣīḥah} \) is not very large, since it would not require a significant change from the one variety to the other.

Moreover, even though this somehow undermines its previous argument, the Society also suggests that texts written in \( \text{al-} \text{luḡah } \text{al-} \text{‘ammīyāh} \) would be harder to understand than those written in \( \text{al-} \text{luḡah } \text{al-} \text{faṣīḥah} \). In their opinion, it would be as incomprehensible as Circassian or Albanian.

‘Moreover, what is written in the folk language (\( \text{luḡat al-} \text{‘ammah} \)) is hard to understand. If it is written in the same way as it is pronounced, it would be more similar to the language of the Circassians or the Albanians. (Society, 1882: 553 [4])
And the Society further illustrates its point with the following anecdote:

‘One of the superior writers wrote once a story in their language (lugatuhum) and it was difficult to read and understand for both the elite (al-ḥāṣ) and the common people (al-‘āmm). If we would not fear to elaborate too much, we would relate it here.’ (Society, 1882a: 553 [4])

In other words, the difference between al-luğah al-‘āmmīyah and al-faslīnah is seriously downplayed if it is in function of sustaining the position that al-luğah al-‘āmmīyah should be replaced with al-luğah al-faslīnah. However, when it comes to the possibility of replacing al-luğah al-faslīnah with al-luğah al-‘āmmīyah, the difference suddenly takes such proportions that it would cause comprehension problems.

The anecdote also clearly suggests that at least a few writers were actively experimenting with writing deliberately in Arabic varieties that deviated clearly from the existing norm. For instance, in Cairo, several periodicals containing articles written in a variety that deviated from fushā were published at the end of the nineteenth century. ‘Al-tankāb wa al-takbīr’ (published by ‘Abdallah Al-Nadīm in 1881) and ‘Abū Naẓ̄ārah Zarqā’ (Ya’qūb Ṣ̄anmā’, 1878) were already published before the debate in Al-Muqtatatf was opened. ‘Al-‘Ustād’ (Abdallah Al-Nadīm, 1892), ‘Al-‘Arqūl’ (Muḥammad Al-Naḡḡār, 1894) and ‘Al-Gazālah’ (Gūrğī Zammānīr, 1896) were published during the following years. (Sa’dīd, 1972: 84)

Written texts that deviate from the classical norm have existed from the moment this norm was established (around 800).

The kinds of deviations and their causes are highly variable, as discussed by Versteegh (1997). Sometimes the author is simply not able to adhere strictly to the classical norms for written language use. The deviations in such texts can then not only contain mistakes and colloquial forms, but also pseudo- (hypo- and hyper-) corrections.

Other authors, however, purposely inserted colloquial forms into the text in order to indicate the original oral character of the text or to evoke the liveliness of a conversation. These texts generally do not contain mistakes or pseudo-corrections. Deviations of the classical norm can also be found in certain scientific treatises, administrative and commercial texts, and rather informally written texts, where strict adherence to the norm was not considered as important as in other text genres (as is the case, for instance, for religious or juridical texts). Certain genres of (folk or popular) poetry might also deviate from the classical norm.

A special example is provided by those texts that were written by Christian and Jewish authors and which were meant for their ‘in-group,’ respectively other
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Christians or Jews. In such texts the authors tended to apply the written norms less strictly than in texts aimed at Muslim readers (Versteegh, 1997: 114-129).

Versteegh further mentions that despite the highly differentiated character of these texts and the different kinds and degrees of deviations and their causes, as well as their geographical and temporal differentiation, texts containing deviations from the classical norm (such as colloquialisms, mistakes or pseudo-corrections) are generally labeled 'Middle Arabic' (Versteegh, 1997: 114-129).

However, as is also the case with other labels concerning Arabic (see our discussion in Chapter 1), Middle Arabic has been used to cover different loads. Some authors used the label 'Middle Arabic' to refer to a certain stage in the development of Arabic, while others consider it a discrete variety of Arabic. I agree with Versteegh that if the term is used to refer to all the cases mentioned above, the label obviously can only be used as a general umbrella term for texts deviating from the classical norm.

Moreover, also the degree of deviation from the established norm (for instance, the degree of interference of colloquial Arabic) in these written texts is highly variable. After stating that in some texts the entire structure of the language is almost colloquial,' Versteegh remarks that 'even in the most extreme cases of colloquial interference the texts still cannot be regarded as truly dialectal, because they continue to be approximations of Classical Arabic, albeit with a lot of colloquial features thrown in,' (Versteegh, 1997: 115) and 'whether authors deliberately use colloquial features or simply fail to attain the level of grammatically correct speech, they always remain within the framework of the standard language' (Versteegh, 1997: 128).

In my opinion, whether a text is considered to 'remain within the framework of the standard' or not, regardless of its degree of deviation from this 'standard,' is again not always a strictly linguistic question but also an ideological one. (See also Chapter 1.) This means that other authors can (and actually do) consider these texts as deviating too much from the standard and consider them out of the 'framework of the standard.' This is illustrated by the following paragraph in which the Society also refutes the hypothetical allegation that merchants write in al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah.

'If somebody would claim that many of the merchants write in the folk language (al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah), we say: 'Certainly not!' Rather most of what they write are Arabic words (kalimāt ‘arabīyah) which they learned from their teachers when they were young. Their non-conformity to the grammatical rules of inflection and the insertion of some colloquial words (kalimāt ‘iştilāhiyah) does not harm comprehension.' (Society, 1882a: 553 [4])

26 Quotation marks mine.
Unfortunately the Society does not give concrete examples of the written language use of merchants (which again confirms our observation about limited empirical evidence).

I think that our remark concerning Al-Yaṣīṣī’s evaluation of the stories of ‘A thousand and one nights’ and ‘Antarah’ also applies to the Society’s evaluation of the merchants’ texts. These texts contain both faṣīḥah and non-faṣīḥah linguistic elements, which are referred to by the Society as ‘non-conformity to the grammatical rules of the pure Arabs’ and ‘some colloquial words.’ While the Society stresses the faṣīḥah character of the texts as a whole, dismissing somehow the deviations they contain, another person could easily stress the non-faṣīḥah elements of the text in order to sustain a claim of the non-faṣīḥah character of the texts.

It is the ‘hybrid’ character of the texts (because of the fact that both kinds of linguistic elements appear in them) that allows for a different evaluation, which is necessarily also based on other than strictly linguistic reasons.

Even though H.H. stresses the importance of comprehensibility as a criteria for the eloquence of language use (see also Chapter 6), he also stresses the fact that the folk language (luḵat al-ʿāmmah) cannot be considered eloquent (faṣīḥah), because of its lack of analogy with the rules of al-luḵah al-faṣīḥah.

"This statement is also unambiguous: the folk language (luḵat al-ʿāmmah) is not eloquent (faṣīḥah) for the scholars of rhetoric because of its enormous deviation from analogy (qiyyāṣ) [with al-faṣīḥah]. If he doubts anything of this he has to check this book and the commentaries [on it]." (H.H., 1882: 692 [6])

In the previous section I already referred to the fact that Qandalaft downplayed the difference between the spoken and the written language in both his articles. However, what is more important is that at the same time he recognizes the fact that there is a difference, even if not to such a degree that it would hinder comprehension. Thus he also minimizes the importance of linguistic difference for comprehension, implicitly acknowledging that a limited degree of variability does not cause problems. In order to further sustain his argument he refers to the large difference between spelling and pronunciation in English, which creates a spelling problem for the English ʿāmmah, who do not write anything without consulting a dictionary. Nevertheless, the English do not consider a re-evaluation of their spelling system. Qandalaft then further argues that if the English do not deem it necessary to change their language because of this, why would the Arabs have to change their language because of a similar problem. (Qandalaft, 1882b: 109)
Inherent qualities of al-luğah al-faṣṭḥah and al-luğah al-ʿāmmiyah

In the debate, al-luğah al-faṣṭḥah and al-luğah al-ʿāmmiyah are not only treated as different varieties of Arabic, they are also clearly unequal varieties for all the debaters, again with the exception of Al-Mumkin.

Even though Ṣarrāf and Nimr appear to give a neutral description of the three potential solutions for the linguistic problem impeding general progress in the Arab world, it is nevertheless obvious which solution carries their approval. This appears first of all from their decision to refer to the written language as ‘al-ʿarabīyah al-ḥarāmīyah’ (correct Arabic). I demonstrated in the previous chapter that this choice implies that the other varieties of Arabic are not ‘correct,’ which is an implicit evaluation of the varieties in question.

I have demonstrated that by choosing and using linguistic labels also the other participants made implicit evaluations of the linguistic varieties they described. The debaters did not have to be necessarily conscious about these implicit connotations and evaluations of the linguistic labels. This was clearly illustrated by the case of Al-Mumkin, who by using the label ‘correct Arabic’ somehow undermined his own position, since he, unwittingly and by implication, admitted the incorrectness of al-luğah al-ʿāmmiyah.

Many evaluations of both al-faṣṭḥah and al-ʿāmmiyah are much more explicit, however. For instance, Ṣarrāf and Nimr evaluate al-luğah al-faṣṭḥah in their discussion of the third solution, namely

‘to teach our children to speak correct Arabic (al-ʿarabīyah al-ḥarāmīyah), so that a natural disposition (malakah) comes in them and that they speak in the same way as they write. This is in our opinion the noblest, safest and most beneficial solution because correct Arabic has an extensive lexicon (wāṣīʿat al-mutūn), precise grammatical rules (maḏbūṭat al-qawāʿid) and a wealth of books (qarnīyah bi-al-kutub). This enables it to keep pace with science more than most other languages of the world, especially since it has two extensive categories [for expansion] (bābān wāṣīʿān), namely arabicization [of loans] (bāb al-ṭaʿrīb) and compounding (nahī).’ (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [4])

Moreover, in the same way as some of the authors indirectly associated the ʿāmmah with ignorance, Ṣarrāf and Nimr associate the spoken language with ignorance.

‘Or we write our books in the language that we speak, in the same way as the Italians, the Greeks and other communities (ʿurnām) whose languages became corrupted in the course of time and the reign of the night. Then, when the suns of science returned to them they did not see a way to restitute their ancient languages (ʿirgāʾ lugāṭīhim al-qadimāh) and they contented themselves with the current languages at that time (al-luğāt al-ṣaʿīḥah hinaʾ idīn). They refined/revised them and wrote their books in them.’ (Ṣarrāf and Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])
Since they mention these 'qualities' specifically with reference to *al-faṣḥah*, the 'correct Arabic,' *Ṣarrāf* and *Nimr* somehow imply that the spoken language does not have these qualities.

Even though *Al-Yāziġī* tries to diminish the difference between *al-faṣḥah* and the folk languages, he is nevertheless clearly convinced of the superiority of *al-faṣḥah*:

>'it has exhaustively treated grammatical rules (*mustawfiyat al-qawā'id*), a precise style (*muḥkamat al-'uslāb*) and extensive conventional rules (*wāṣiṭat al-'awā'), which the folk languages do not even approach. This is generally accepted.' (*Al-Yāziġī*, 1881: 404 [2])

*Al-Yāziġī* not only establishes the superiority of *al-faṣḥah*, he also compares it to the folk languages, explicitly confirming that the folk languages do not have the same qualities, or at least not to the same degree.

This opinion is also (almost literally) repeated by the Damascene Literary Society:

>'It [*al-faṣḥah*] has a rich grammar (*mustawfiyat al-qawā'id*), abundant meanings (*wāfiyat al-maqaṣid*), and precise specific and typological rules (*madbiṣat al-'awā' al-ṣaḥṣiyah wa al-nawīyah*). In this the folk languages, and even the languages of the Western nations, as we have concluded before, do not even approach it.' (*Society*, 1882a: 553 [4])

Again the Damascene Literary Society establishes the superiority of *al-faṣḥah*, not only in comparison to the folk languages, but also in comparison to languages other than Arabic. Both *Al-Yāziġī* and the Damascene Literary Society confirm the superiority of *al-faṣḥah* in comparison to the folk languages, without however describing these folk languages themselves.

In his anecdote about his experiences in *Gabal al-Nūṣayrîyah*, *Dāgīr* describes their language as 'their strange words in the folk language and their obscure expressions' (*Dāgīr*, 1882: 557 [4]). This can still be interpreted as a reference to the fact that he was not able to understand his pupils well in the beginning of his residence.

However, *Dāgīr* also explicitly describes the inferiority of the folk languages when he argues that it is impossible to use one of the folk languages for writing.

>'Secondly, the unsuitability of the folk language to be[come] the writing language. Suppose that it were possible for us to use one of its dialects and that the [first] obstacle were dropped, then we have yet another obstacle, which is as difficult and impossible as the first one. This is the unsuitability of any of these folk languages to be a writing language, because its conventional rules are confined (*'awda'uhā hāriġah*) and its words are disgusting (*'alāzuhā samīḏah*). There are no rules to regulate it (*lā ḥudūd li-dabṭihā*) and no specifications to determine it (*wa lā quyūd*
The perception of linguistic difference

la-rabīthā). It unites in itself abundant and delicate words (ğazl al-lafz wa raqīqihī) with stupid and vulgar language use (ṣaḥīf al-kalām wa rakīkīhī). (Dāgir, 1882: 558 [8])

These bad qualities, which need no further explanation, are then contrasted with the superior qualities of al-faṣīḥah.

‘[It is] unlike al-luğah al-faṣīḥah, since it avoids to be all what was mentioned. Rather it has an extensive corpus (wāsi‘at al-muḥān) and wondrous arts and marvelous branches (‘aḡībat al-funūn wa ǧarībat al-ṣūqān). It has precise grammatical rules and regulated styles (maḍbūrat al-qawād wa muḥkamat al-ʾasālīb). It has categories, such as derivation (iṣṭiqāq), conjugation (taṣrīf), compounding (naḥī), arabicization [of loans] (ta‘rīb), and inflection (i‘rāb), for which the other languages envy it. It has epitomes (iḥtiṣārāt), metaphors (istiʿārat), metonyms (kināyāt) and other literary devices, which make the intelligentsia tremble with delight and amazement. It has books on all the arts and subjects, which decorate the inner parts of the museums and libraries.’ (Dāgir, 1881: 558 [9])

What is even more important for Dāgir is the argument that all these characteristics enable al-faṣīḥah to keep pace with the modern world and scientific developments.

‘With it [al-faṣīḥah] we became able to keep pace with science, better than the others, because we have the devices of [morphological] derivation (iṣṭiqāq), compounding (naḥī), and the arabicization of loans (ta‘rīb) that suffice us in the effort of devising the new words that are required. We would not, while the situation is like this, proceed to demolish the knowledge of it and to annihilate its institutions, willingly or not, and satisfy by this a folk language (luğah ʾāmmīyah) that has no more than ungrammatical language use (lağw) and senseless jabber (ḥadayān).’ (Dāgir, 1882: 558 [9])

Apart from the ungrammaticality of the folk language, Dāgir also stresses the limited scope of al-luğah al-ʾāmmīyah, which contrasts sharply with the above-mentioned wideness and possibilities for lexical expansion of al-faṣīḥah.

‘It has been said that the definition of language (luğah) is sounds by means of which every people (qaʾwm) expresses its objectives. But we do not see that the folk language can carry out our goals, only if our aims are limited to greetings, condolences, and other oral forms of showing deference even though it is in this, in my opinion, the language of subtlety (dahā”), shrewdness (iḥtiyāl) and diplomacy (bālūrkiyāt).’ (Dāgir, 1882: 558 [10])

Moreover, Dāgir doubts the possibility and usefulness of standardizing or developing the folk language into a full-fledged language. He states that it even would be easier to create a new language (luğah ǧādiḏah) then achieving the
unification and standardization of the folk language. He is convinced that it is not useful to go through all this trouble if a valid alternative already exists, namely al-‘arabīyah al-fuṣḥā. His argument is that a language that is completely appropriate for the purposes of the society already exists. So why bother to standardize another one or create a new one?

"In doing so, the creation of a new language (lūgah ǧardīdah) would then be easier for us than patching this shabby language (or rather shabby in the plural because all of them are worn out and ragged), which is trouble for nothing (al-ta’b sudan). But, why do we wander in the darkness of the night, if a lightening star is shining? We have a faṣīḥah language, [which is] beautiful and clear." (Dāġīr, 1882: 559 [12])

H.H. describes al-faṣīḥah as the ‘noblest language’ ('aṭraf al-luḡāt) (H.H., 1882: 693 [8]).

Again, Al-Mumkin is the only one to provide a positive evaluation of the folk language. He refers to the fact that the folk languages can serve the same purposes as al-faṣīḥah, even if they do not have inflection. Every language that enables a human being to express what he thinks and that can generate meaning is a language.

"Even if [the spoken languages] differed from town to town, they are sufficient "to render the intended meaning and to express what is in the mind, and that is the meaning of ‘al-lisān” or ‘al-luḡāh” (language). The loss of inflection (‘i’rāb) in it is not harmful."

(Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8], quote from Ibn Ḥaldān)

He also reacts directly to Dāġīr’s attack on the folk language:

"Secondly, the unsuitability of the folk language (lūgat al-‘āmmah) to be a writing language (lūgat al-kitābah) and the following beautiful description of the folk language (lūgat al-‘āmmah) such as “ḥarīgah (confined), samīgah (disgusting), laḡw (ungrammatical language use), Ḥadīyān (senseless jabber)." This is what we do not accept at all from him, since the testimony of Ibn Ḥaldān, the imam of the scholars, was just mentioned. When the understanding person reflects, he accepts his statement, if he sees that the folk language (lūgat al-‘āmmah) is appropriate for all our purposes and it is very eloquent. It is rare that there are good rhetoric qualities which it does not have." (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 621 [9])

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27 Quotation marks original.

28 Quotation marks original.
**The unity of al-faṣīḥah versus the diversity of al-ʿāmmīyah**

Whether the debaters stress or downplay the differences between *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah* and *al-luḡah al-ʿāmmīyah*, it appears that they are all convinced of the fact that they are dealing with two different varieties of Arabic. Even though the degree of difference between *al-faṣīḥah* and *al-ʿāmmīyah* is in dispute, there is a consensus between the participants in the debate that they are two distinct varieties of Arabic, and thus the debaters produce and reproduce the dividing line.

As pointed out in Chapter 1, ‘*[c]ultural categories of communication, such as named languages, dialects, standards, speech communities and genres, are constructed out of the messy variability of spoken interaction’* (Gal & Woolard 1995:129). [emphasis mine]

‘Constructing’ a linguistic variety involves deciding as to what forms of linguistic variability are included in the variety, and which ones are excluded from it. In other words, defining linguistic varieties involves distinguishing the differences between them.

I already illustrated this when I described the ways in which the differences between *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah* and *al-luḡah al-ʿāmmīyah* were perceived and presented by the debaters and how these differences were strategically stressed or downplayed.

The complete collection of linguistic elements that we would call Arabic, (which is in itself of course an abstraction), was organized into two smaller collections of Arabic linguistic elements, and *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah* and *al-luḡah al-ʿāmmīyah* were created and reproduced as two distinct varieties.

I have also seen how the two varieties were differently evaluated and valued by the debaters. In general, they characterized *al-faṣīḥah* by grammaticality, lexical richness, ample possibilities for lexical expansion, and so on. On the other hand *al-luḡah al-ʿāmmīyah* was characterized by a lack of grammaticality or even ungrammaticality, a limited scope, and so on. Such characterizations further reproduce and underscore the division of Arabic into two varieties by presenting them not only as different, but basically unequal.

Since constructing linguistic varieties involves the reduction of a continuum of linguistic variability to linguistic units or collections of properties perceived as units, one is not only forced to deal with the choice of what does and does not belong to the identified or constructed collection called language (variety), but also with the internal variability within the collection, namely its internal variability. The latter task often involves standardization, i.e. the transformation of internal variability to internal unity, mostly for the purpose of unity in written modes of communication, as well as canonization, i.e. the formulation of grammatical, morphological and other prescriptive rules.

In the following section I will pay attention to the perception of internal variability within *al-luḡah al-ʿāmmīyah* and *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah* and how this perception constructs and reproduces them as distinct varieties.
Al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah presented as one linguistic variety

Since the participants are aware that there are in fact many non-faṣīḥah varieties of Arabic which can be mutually very different, (something which is often invoked as an argument against the standardization of al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah) it is striking that all participants use the label ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ as a collective name for all these varieties.

Despite the linguistic variability and the mutual differences that are covered by this one term, there is one common characteristic that seems to be more important than all others separating these folk languages from one another, namely the fact that they are considered non-faṣīḥah. This one common characteristic is sufficient for all the participants to allow for the use of such a broad label as ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ or ‘luğat al-‘āmmah’ to cover the entire range of linguistic variability involved.

This was clearly illustrated by Al-Yāziği’s negative definition of eloquent expression, namely that it did not contain ‘any folk language.’ Also Dāğır clearly exemplifies the idea that the folk languages are basically defined by their non-faṣīḥā-ness, specifying the characteristics that they have in common and that distinguish them as a whole form al-faṣīḥah:

‘Therefore, diminishing the value of al-‘arabiyyah al-faṣīḥā by replacing it with a language that does not conform to its name (‘āmmiyah) except that it is in all the regions conforms to the narrowness of its rules and the lack of harmony without limitations and bounds.’ (Dāġir, 1882: 559 [12])

When the diversity of the folk languages is stressed, the label ‘al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah’ is most often used in its plural form ‘al-luğāt al-‘āmmiyah.’ This means that the collective noun is used differently, namely in its singular or in its plural form, depending on the argument the debater is trying to make.

The singular form (al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah – al-luğāt al-‘āmmiyah) is mostly used when the non-faṣīḥah variability is seen as one collective characterized by its non-faṣīḥah character, while the plural form is mostly used for accentuating what is perceived as its enormous diversity. Moreover, this diversity is usually negatively evaluated.

Al-luğah al-faṣīḥah presented as one linguistic variety

The task of reproducing al-faṣīḥah as one variety is made much easier by the fact that it can be seen as the product of a long standardization process during which its

1 Brackets original.
phonological, morphological, syntactical and stylistic characteristics were scrutinized and transformed into a canon of prescriptive linguistic rules.

In the debate we are presently dealing with, Al-Mumkin refers to this with his suggestion that al-faṣīḥah (to which he refers in that context as al-luğah al-qadīmah (the ancient language)) is itself a collection of the different luqāt of the Arab tribes.

Also The Damascene Literary Society refers to the enormous attention that al-faṣīḥah received:

'It was the painstaking care of the scholars ('ulamā') at the Arabic language (al-luğah al-ʿarabiyah) that made them write about its vocabulary (mufradātuhā), its syntax (ṣumāluḥā) and specific characteristics (hashāʿīsāḥ) as many books as the stars, so that the mind can almost judge that they did not loose any detail of it.'

(Society, 1882: 552 [2])

On the other hand, all the participants have to admit, at least implicitly, that also al-luğah al-faṣīḥah is characterized by internal variability. This appeared already indirectly from the discussion concerning the comprehensibility of written texts, in which it was suggested that the language use in written texts must be adapted to the receivers. This is of course only possible if there is enough variability within al-faṣīḥah. Generalizing, we can say that it was suggested that there is, on the one hand, a faṣīḥah for general purposes, which is characterized by the avoidance of difficult and obsolete words and, on the other hand, a faṣīḥah that is characterized by the use of strange and difficult words, we might say a faṣīḥah for specific purposes. The internal variability within al-faṣīḥah is also indirectly discussed in the polemic concerning eloquence (fasāḥah or baṭāgah).

Nevertheless, almost all participants stress the internal unity of al-faṣīḥah, contrasting it with what they call the enormous diversity of al-ʿāmmiyah. When Al-Mumkin refers to the variability within al-faṣīḥah, Dāgūr diminishes its impact, while at the same time positively evaluating this (diminished) variability.

As we will see, the (limited) variability of al-faṣīḥah is positively framed by the debaters as lexical or expressive richness, while the variability of al-ʿāmmiyah is negatively valued as divisiveness, problematic for mutual understanding.

The diversity of the folk languages

The enormous difference between the individual folk languages is a recurrent argument that is used against the standardization of any Arabic variety other than al-faṣīḥah. The difference between the folk language underlies two different arguments against the replacement of al-faṣīḥah.
On the one hand, the question is raised which one of all these folk languages should be chosen as the alternative for al-faṣṭḥah. Or as Al-Yāziği formulates it:

"[W]hich language of the folk languages would we use, since between each of these languages and its sister there is a difference qua pronunciation (lahḡah) and conventions (awḍā'), which is at least as large as the difference between each of them and al-luqāh al-faṣṭḥah? So, whichever of these languages we choose to write in, it will take us to what we flee from. As such, in the frame of this pursuit, it is necessary to transform all the languages of the region/lands (lugūt al-bilād) to one language. If this is so, then it is obvious that it is much better and easier to return the languages to al-luqāh al-faṣṭḥah [...]" (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 404 [2])

This argument is repeated and further developed by Dāǧir who also stresses the great diversity of the folk languages in order to refute the idea that it would be possible to replace the written language with the spoken:

"First, the diversity of the folk language ('iḥtilāf luqat al-'āmmah). It is not easy for us to make one of the folk languages the writing language (luqat al-kutūbah) while it contains so much diversity ('iḥtilāf) and divergence of its sections (iṣa'ā'ub al-'aṭrāf), that it leads to an astonishing amazement. Each of these languages is different qua pronunciation (lahḡatun) and conventional rules ('awḍā'ūn) as a foreign language is in comparison to other languages. If we were able (hypothetically)\(^3\) to write a book in the Syrian language, for instance. would the Iraqi benefit from it? Would the Maghrībian not laugh at it? Would the Egyptian not ridicule it?" (Dāǧir, 1882: 557 [4])

In Dāǧir's opinion two problems emanate from the diversity of the folk languages when the language user is taken into consideration. First of all, there is the problem of mutual understanding. If one of the folk languages is chosen as a writing language, the speakers of the other folk languages will not be able to understand texts written in the first one. The other problem concerns language attitudes.

Dāǧir argues that it will not only be hard to obtain mutual understanding between the speakers of the different folk languages, but the speakers will also mock this newly written folk language if it is not theirs. He is convinced that no speaker of Arabic will accept that his own vernacular will be replaced with the vernacular of somebody else.

Dāǧir further underscores his argument based on the diversity of the folk language by emphasizing that even the smallest administrative unit has its own dialect, and that all these dialects differ from each other as much as each of them differs from al-faṣṭḥah:

\(^3\) Brackets original.
The perception of linguistic difference

The dialect of which province of Syria will we use, or rather which city, or rather which village, or rather which neighborhood? Since the respected Al-Mumkin knows that in Syria itself there are several folk languages (луғَات šażā 'āmmiyah) that differ mutually from each other as much as al-luğah al-faṣīḥah differs from the folk languages. (Dāgīr, 1882: 557 [4])

This is followed by his personal anecdote about ġabał Al-Nuṣayrīyah, which we already discussed, namely that his pupils there understood him better when he spoke al-faṣīḥah than when he spoke his own vernacular. We know that his conclusion was that not only the variety spoken in ġabał Al-Nuṣayrīyah is closer to al-faṣīḥah than it is to other spoken varieties, but that this is also the case for these other spoken varieties.

Its pronunciation is diverse (lahğatuhā muḫṭalifūh) and its conventions are diverse (‘awdā‘hā mutabāqā‘ināh). The Syrian laughs at the dialect/pronunciation (of the Egyptian (lahğat al-miṣrī), and the Egyptian at that of the Maghribian, the Maghribian at that of the Iraqi, and the Iraqi at that of the Syrian. The truth is that they all cause indisputably laughter and ridicule. Without consensus about one dialect (lahğah wāḥidah) the situation will become very difficult. (Dāgīr, 1882: 558 [7])

The unity of al-faṣīḥah

The diversity of the folk languages, which is seen as impeding comprehension and causing the mockery of speakers of other varieties, is then contrasted with the internal unity of al-faṣīḥah. The debaters have to recognize that there is also a certain degree of variability. However, in contrast with the diversity of the folk languages, this is considered to be ‘non-disturbing’ variability, which is often positively valued as lexical, morphological and expressive richness.

It is Al-Mumkin who is the first to refer to the variability within al-faṣīḥah, when he argues that al-faṣīḥah itself was created by unifying and standardizing the different varieties spoken by the Arab tribes during the first centuries of the Hijra. He uses this historical argument in order to defend the idea that the folk language can be used as a written language. He suggests that if al-faṣīḥah went through such a process, why can contemporary Arabs not do the same with the currently spoken varieties and standardize them into a new standard language?

The argument was made as a reaction to Al-Ŷāziğrī’s objection that the folk language cannot be used as a written language because of its diversity.

31 Literally: we have to undo a thorny branch of its leaves in a dark night (ḥaṭ al-qattād fi al-laylah al-ẓuhnā‘).
Concerning his opinion about using the folk language, that with the difference between the dialects of the Syrians, the Egyptians, the Iraqi and the Maghribians (jahağa al-sūrīyin wa al-miṣrīyin wa al-‘iraqīyin wa al-maḡribīyin) it is difficult.32 It is, even though this difficulty is correct, as in the opinion of the respected [Al-Yazıği], what happened in Arabic itself, not to say that it happened in all languages. Does he not see that correct Arabic is the collection of the different linguistic variants of the Arab tribes33 and that the multitude of names for one designation is an unmistakable indication that it is a collection of linguistic variants of different tribes? This is obvious for the one who has the slightest knowledge of the science of language. In the same way as it was possible for the scholars of the first centuries of the Hijra to collect ancient Arabic despite their limited means, it is possible for the scholars of this epoch to collect folk Arabic and to regulate it. Especially since the possible means for this are many times as much as they were then. (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [2])

Before reacting to Al-Mumkin’s suggestion that al-faṣṭah is a collection of the different luğāt of the Arab tribes, Dāğir emphasizes that Al-Mumkin cannot claim that al-luğah al-faṣṭah is characterized by the same kind of diversity as the folk languages. He dismisses diversity within al-faṣṭah as ‘some accidental differences,’ (al-‘iṣṭiḥāf al-tārīqah) that ‘are no more than an inessential issue that must not be taken into consideration.’ (Dāğir, 1882: 557 [6])

These accidental and inessential differences result from the differences of opinion between the grammarians (‘ulamā’ an-nahw) who were responsible for the standardization of al-faṣṭah. Moreover, Dāğir argues, their divergent views only concern inessential aspects of the language since they all agree on the basic inflection rules (Dāğir, 1882: 557 [6]).

Then Dāğir turns to Al-Mumkin’s suggestion that al-faṣṭah is a collection of the different luğāt of the Arab tribes:

‘Although al-luğah al-faṣṭah is a collection of the different luğāt of the Arab tribes with as an indication “the multitude of names for one designation” (as such).34 This does not invite us to avoid it, evading the difficulty of adopting it, but rather the multitude of synonyms in it facilitates for us the art of compositions and poetry. Whether [al-faṣṭah] is a collection of variants [luğāt] or not, it is the same. Whether it contains few or many synonyms, it is for all its writers and scholars in all places and directions one language (luğah wāḥidah). If [Al-Mumkin’s] conclusion is correct, then it does not apply to the sedentary world (al-ḥadār), because it applies

32 In the original text the word ‘sa‘b’ (difficult) is not mentioned. However, in a note in his second article Al-Mumkin mentions that ‘sa‘b’ was dropped after the word ‘maḡribiyin’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 621).
33 Or: ‘the linguistic variants of the different Arab tribes.’
34 Quotation marks and round brackets original.
to] the days of the Bedouins (badīwah) between tribes, of which most are gone now. But the faṣīḥah language of civilization is the same (lūḡ ah al-haḍārah al-faṣīḥah ħiya hiya) in Egypt, Syria, the Maghreb, Iraq, in its morphology, grammar and all its literature, unless some rare exceptions, in contrast with the folk language.’ (Ḍāḏir, 1882: 557-558 [7])

It is obvious that Ḍāḏir cannot but acknowledge a certain amount of variability within al-faṣīḥah. However, he turns the lexical variability into a positive characteristic that creates a multitude of expressive possibilities.

Ḍāḏir also somehow evades Al-Munkin’s argument that al-faṣīḥah was collected from various tribal varieties by stressing the end result, a unified language, rather than the source(s) and the process by which it was created in Al-Munkin’s opinion. This end result is a language of civilization that is one at a morphological and grammatical level, as well as in its literature. Ḍāḏir dismisses deviations as exceptional and inessential.

Conclusions
In this section, I have tried to demonstrate how al-lūḡ ah al-faṣīḥah and al-lūḡ ah al-ʿāmmīyah were selectively represented as two different varieties of Arabic. In addition, I also dealt with the ways in which the debaters presented the differences between these varieties. These differences were strategically stressed or downplayed depending on the argumentation line the debater was developing. The same is true for the characteristics that were attributed to al-faṣīḥah and al-ʿāmmīyah, of which the perception and representation of internal unity and diversity, respectively, were the most important ones.

In the next chapter we will see that the perception and representation of linguistic unity and diversity is not only important on a linguistic level, but that this has implications on a political level as well.
Chapter 5: Language and identity construction

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In Chapter 2, I argued that as a rule in linguistic debates, there is much more at stake than linguistic issues alone. In that chapter, I focused mainly on the broad historical developments during the 19th century in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire and on how these developments were essential for the *fushā-* 'āmmīyah debate. I argued that without developments in domains such as modern education, the printing press and Arabic language periodicals, as well as the beginnings of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and increasing contacts with Western powers, the debate would not have been conducted in the way it eventually was.

In this chapter I will pay attention to those important ‘non-linguistic’ issues that are at stake in the *fushā-* 'āmmīyah debate itself, and in particular the issue of Arab identity. We will see that even if Arab identity is not directly debated, the participants indirectly pay a lot of attention to it, so that we can call it a core issue.
**Implicit Consensus in the Debate**

The explicit main theme of the debate that we are presently analyzing is the question whether the written language, *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah*, should replace the spoken language, *al-luḡah al-‘āmmīyah*, or the opposite. All the participants dismiss the first option a priori, namely, the replacement of Arabic by a foreign language.

As I hope to have demonstrated, the debaters defended their positions in the debate with explicit, as well as implicit arguments. I also uncovered some of their implicit ideas about language. I then indicated how the debaters strategically employed these arguments and ideas in order to support one or the other position in the debate.

However, despite all differences of opinion, the participants implicitly agree about some important issues. Since these issues are not explicitly discussed in the debate, we can say that there is an unspoken consensus about them. An unspoken or implicit consensus generally is much stronger than a debated one, since its premises are not questioned. Ideas about which an unspoken consensus exists are generally considered to be commonsensical and as such the persons involved do not feel the need to discuss them.

For example, the debate was conducted on the premise that there is a large difference between *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah* and *al-luḡah al-‘āmmīyah*. This difference is described as ‘distance’ (*bu’d*) (*Sarrāf* & *Nimr*, 1881: 353 [2]). However, we demonstrated that the presentation of *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah* and *al-luḡah al-‘āmmīyah* as two different varieties is relative. Although *al-luḡah al-‘āmmīyah* is on the one hand considered and presented by the participants as one linguistic variety, which they contrasted with *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah*, many participants also state that there is actually not one *luḡah ‘āmmīyah*, but that there are several. Nevertheless, the *faṣīḥa-‘āmmīyah* dichotomy is maintained throughout the debate. (Actually, the dichotomy is maintained until now, for instance in the concept of ‘diglossia.’ See Chapter 1.)

This means that there is a very strong (implicit) consensus between the participants that all the non-*faṣīḥah* varieties can in fact be considered as one variety. This is primarily based on the perception of one common characteristic, namely, that they are different from *al-faṣīḥah*. This non- *faṣīḥah* characteristic then seems to overrule all the mutual differences between and variability within these varieties.

There is also a strong consensus between all the participants about the problematic character of the difference between the spoken and the written language. First of all, none of the participants directly questioned this problematization after it had been presented by *Sarrāf* and *Nimr*. Secondly, all participants propose ‘solutions.’
Even if these solutions are not necessarily the same, this means that the debaters implicitly accept the premise that the Arab linguistic situation is problematic, since otherwise they would have questioned this point of departure and no one would have proposed solutions.

All these issues have been discussed in detail above. What concerns us here is another unspoken consensus, which has serious implications for what we might call the construction of Arab identity and eventually even Arab nationalism.

**The existence of an Arabic linguistic community**

Despite all contradictions and all differences of opinion, the debaters implicitly agree that there is such a thing as an Arab community, to which they often refer as ‘the Arab community’ (al-'ummah al-'arabiyah) or ‘the Arab fatherland’ (al-waṭan al-'arabī). These references are the most explicit ones among a range of options which also includes ‘the Arab region/lands’ (al-bilād al-'arabiyah or al-buldān al-'arabiyah), ‘the Arab houses’ (al-diyār al-'arabiyah), as well as ‘the Arabs’ (al-'arab).

In addition there are some references that have a linguistic connotation, such as ‘we, the speakers of Arabic’ (nahnu al-mutakallimūna bi-al-lugah al-'arabiyah) (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [2]) and ‘the people of the Arabic language’ (ahl al-'arabiyah) (Qandalf, 1882a: 696 [6]). These two expressions suggest a linguistic basis for the Arab community.

In this section we will further investigate how this Arab community is discursively constructed as a primarily linguistic one. The Arab identity of this community is then conceived of as a linguistic identity, an identity based on the Arabic language.

Here we touch upon another important unspoken consensus in the debate. The debaters not only all agree that there such a thing as an Arab community, all of them are also convinced that the linguistic unity of this community needs to be preserved and protected, by means of one common language. Again, the fact that this is an unspoken assumption makes it even stronger, since this suggests that it is considered so commonsensical that it does not need discussion.

Moreover, this common language is Arabic. This is clear from the fact that the real discussion in the debate is whether spoken Arabic should replace written Arabic, or the opposite. The replacement of Arabic by another language, presented as a first possible solution at the beginning of the debate, is unanimously dismissed and without further argumentation.

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1 I consciously chose for a literally translation. A more free translation would be ‘the speakers of Arabic.’ However, the suggestion that the speakers of Arabic somehow ‘belong’ to their language would then be lost.
In what follows we will investigate how the idea of one Arab community or nation is constructed, as well as the idea that it is in need of one common language.

**The ‘national’ importance of the debate**

Already in the first article Şarrūf & Nimr frame the linguistic problem as an issue of national importance. They conclude their article with a request directed to

‘all the distinguished writers who vie for the welfare of the fatherland (*ḥayr al-watān*), to present their opinions on this issue and to give it due attention, [since] it is very urgent […]’. (Şarrūf & Nimr, 1881: 354 [5]) [emphasis mine]

The national importance of the linguistic issue is also implied in the title of their article: ‘The Arabic language and success’ (*Al-luğah al-‘arabīyah wa al-naḡāḥ*) (Şarrūf & Nimr, 1881: 352). Even if in the title no specific reference is made to the Arab community, we can say on the basis of the remainder of the article, and specifically its conclusion, that by ‘success’ national success or the welfare of the community/nation is implied. Because of the combination between ‘*al-luğah al-‘arabīyah*’ and ‘*naḡāḥ*’, we can confidently state that the success of the Arab community or nation is meant.

Also Al-Yāziḡī is convinced that the linguistic issue concerns every Arab:

‘Since this question is one of the questions that concerns every Arab (*kull ‘arabī*) to investigate, I wanted to express the opinion that came up in me.’ (Al-Yāziḡī, 1881: 404 [1])

The Arab community or nation is also explicitly mentioned in the title of the article written by The Damascene Literary Society: ‘The success of the Arab community in and by means of its original language’ (*Naḡāḥ al-‘ummah al-‘arabīyah fi lugātihā al-‘aṣlīyah*) (Society, 1882: 551). This title is also the subtitle of the second article by Al-Mumkin, which is mainly a reaction to the article of The Damascene Literary Society (*Al-Mumkin*, 1882b: 618).

In his first article, Al-Mumkin mildly reproached Şarrūf, Nimr and Al-Yāziḡī that they exaggerated the cultural loss that would be caused by abandoning the ancient language because of ‘love for the fatherland’ (*ḥubb al-watān*) and the wish to maintain the ancient (*Al-Mumkin*, 1882a: 495 [3]). This triggered a reaction of The Damascene Literary Society in which it stated that indeed their concern was instigated by ‘love for the fatherland’ (*ḥubb al-watān*) and that this is something to be proud of. (Society, 1882: 556 [10])

In his second article, Al-Mumkin confirms that ‘the welfare of the fatherland (*ḥayr al-watān*) is the subject of our research’ (*Al-Mumkin*, 1882b: 620
[8]) and that 'the aim of both sides is to spread science and the welfare of the fatherland and the nation (al-waṭan wa al-ʿumnah) (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 621 [10]).

Also Qandalaft refers to the importance of the debate for 'the pure nationalist' (al-waṭani al-ṣaft) (Qandalaft, 1882a: 694 [1]).
**TERMINOLOGY**

In the examples quoted above I have translated the terms ‘*ummah*’ and ‘*waṭan*’ as ‘community’ or ‘nation’ and ‘fatherland,’ respectively. However, the meanings of these terms are often more complex and ambiguous than this translation suggests and need a more thorough analysis.

The main reason for this is that due to developments in the domains of education, journalism and, in particular, translation during the 19th century the Arabic language was in flux. In the process of translating European texts into Arabic, the translators encountered concepts that had been until then unknown in the Arab world, (for instance, because their society was structured differently). Their main challenge was to find or construct suitable equivalents for the terms and concepts they had to translate into Arabic. Basically, they had three solutions at their disposal. One solution was to use an already existing Arabic word by expanding its semantic load. Other possibilities were the creation of a neologism or the transliteration (arabicization) of the term, by giving it an Arabic form.

Usually, the first solution was preferred. The result was that new meanings and connotations were given to already existing terms, which did not necessarily lose their meanings and connotations that had been current until then. Sometimes, the new meaning eventually overruled the previous meaning, while sometimes the opposite happened. A lot of the terms that are used in nineteenth-century texts fluctuate between their classical-medieval and modern meanings. The main difficulty for the twentieth-century reader is to remain constantly aware of this ambiguity. One danger is to read modern meanings into terms that were still basically used in their classical-medieval sense. On the other hand, reading the terms exclusively in their classical-medieval sense would be in many cases a limitation too. (See also the section on translation in Chapter 2).

In this section I will analyze the different meanings and connotations of terms that are used in the debate to refer to geographical and administrative units or human communities. I will also investigate the ways in which these terms are used. This means that I will investigate the adjectives that are used to qualify them, as well as other constructions in which they are used.

The debaters use many terms, ranging from terms that refer to human communities, such as ‘community’ or ‘nation’ (*ummah*) and ‘patria’ or ‘fatherland’ (*waṭan*), ‘race’ or ‘national community’ (*ḏins* or *ḏinsiyah*), to terms referring to geographical units, such as ‘country’ or ‘region’ (*balad, pl. bilād - buldān*), ‘region’ (*qitr*), ‘province’ (*muqāṭa‘ah*), ‘village’ (*qariyah*), and administrative or political terms, such as ‘state’ or ‘government’ (*dawlah*).

These terms are often further specified by adding an adjective or by using it in a genitive construction, such as ‘the Arab region’ (*al-bilād al-‘arbā‘iyah*), ‘the
Arab countries’ (al-buldān al-‘arabīyah), or ‘the government of France’ (dawlat firansā), the government of Egypt (dawlat misr).

In addition, there are other references that imply human communities, such as ‘the Arabs’ (al-‘arab), the Greeks (al-yūnānīyān), ‘we, the speakers of Arabic’ (naḥnu al-mutakallimūna bi-al-‘arabīyah), ‘the people of Arabic’ (‘ahl al-‘arabīyah) and so on. Also the analysis of the use of person deixis can be very revealing, as I hope to have demonstrated already.

The label ‘ummah (pl. ‘umam)

Semantic development of the term ‘ummah

In general, four different meanings can be given to the label ‘ummah. First of all, it has the meaning of ‘community’ or ‘folk,’ which is also its oldest meaning. In this sense it was also used in other Semitic languages. In the Koran, this notion of community is narrowed down to that of a religious community and in later verses also specifically the Islamic community. In medieval texts, the term is usually means the latter. However, the use of the term with its original sense of ‘community’ or ‘group of people,’ remained possible. During the 19th century, it became gradually the most current equivalent for the term ‘nation’ in Arabic translations of European texts. In contemporary language use, ‘nation’ became the most current meaning of ‘ummah, without losing, however, its connotation of the Islamic community as a whole (Denny, 2000: 859-863; Ayalon, 1987: 27-28).

The use of the term ‘ummah in the debate

In the debate the term ‘ummah is used with both the connotations of ‘community,’ or ‘people, folk,’ and ‘nation.’ Often, the reader gets the impression that the meaning lies somewhere in between, namely that the term does not yet really refer to ‘nation’ in its full modern sense, but neither simply to ‘folk’ or ‘people.’

Ayalon (1987) also draws attention to the fact that during the 19th century the terms ‘ummah’ and ‘sha‘b’ were often used interchangeably. However, although ‘sha‘b’ was usually used to refer to ‘the people’ in the sense of ‘the governed, while ‘ummah rather had the sense of ‘people’ in the sense of ‘community.’

‘The distinction, however, was less than rigorous, and writers in later years sometimes used both ‘ummah and sha‘b interchangeably in their works.’ (Ayalon, 1987: 51)

Since in the context of the debate it is almost always to translate ‘ummah as ‘community,’ but not always as ‘nation,’ I generally preferred the first option in my translation of the articles. However, when necessary, I added ‘nation’ to it after a
slash (i.e. community/nation). For instance, in Al-Mumkin’s statement ‘the welfare of the fatherland and the nation (ḥayr al-watān wa al-ʻumam),’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 621 [10]), I preferred ‘nation,’ because of the strong nationalist connotations of the phrase.

Ṣarrāf and Nimr refer to the ‘communities whose languages became corrupted’ (al-ʻumam alladīna fasadat lugātuhum) (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3]). In this context, the term ʻumma can be translated both as the ‘nations’ or as the ‘peoples’ or ‘communities.’ However, we might have a strong indication in favor of ‘peoples,’ or ‘communities,’ since the relative pronoun is used in its plural form (alladīna). If the term ʻumma would be used in its more abstract sense of nation, the relative pronoun would preferably be used in its feminine singular form (allatī) (which also occurs in the debate).

The Damascene Literary Society uses the term ʻumma quite often. As already mentioned, the title of its article is ‘The success of the Arab community in and by means of its original language’ (Naḡāḥ al-ʻumma al-ʻarabiyah fi lugātihā al-ʻaṣlīyah). In the introduction of their article, they argue, that language (nuq wa bayān) is the characteristic differentiating human beings from animals, but also that it is a differentiating characteristic between individual humans and groups of humans (ʻumam).

‘Despite their [nuq and bayān] presence in every community (ʻumma) and every of its individuals, they are clearly differentiated. Depending on their [nuq and bayān], differentiation, in surplus or deficiency, communities and individuals are differentiated in excellence and perfection.’ (Society, 1882: 552 [1])

Again, ʻumma can be translated as both ‘nation’ or ‘community.’

In the next paragraph, the Westerners (al-ġarbīyâna) and the Easterners (al-šarqīyâna) are indirectly considered as two nations (a point which we already discussed previously):

‘Both the Westerners and the Easterners accept this and the books of both communities/nations (ʻumam) support this.’ (Society, 1882a: 552 [1])

However, in the same article they refer to the French community/nation (al-ʻummah al-faransâwiyah) (Society, 1882a: 552 [2]).

In my analysis of the perception of the West, in Chapter 3, I already referred briefly to the fact that, on the one hand, the West was considered as one community or nation (ʻumma), which was often contrasted with the East or the Arabs, and that at the same time France, Italy, Great Britain and Greece were also considered as individual nations (ʻumam). Moreover, by contrasting the Arabs with
the 'Western community/nation,' they indirectly considered the Arabs as a community/nation as well.

Other references made by the Society are 'the language of a community' (luğat 'ummah), the languages of the foreign communities (luğat al-'umam al-'ağnabīyah), (Society, 1882a: 553 [4]), and 'all the communities' (gâmi' al-'umam) (Society, 1882a: 555 [9]).

Al-Mumkin also uses the term 'ummah almost as a synonym of waṭan when he refers to the 'welfare of the fatherland and the nation' (hayr al- waṭan wa al- 'ummah) (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 621 [10]).

The lack of religious connotations of the term 'ummah in the debate
It is striking that in the context of this debate the term 'ummah is not used with its religious connotation, but that rather its meaning of a community or people, related by language or territory, is preferred. We have seen that the term is used with specific reference to the West or the East, in general, or with reference to specific communities/nations such as the Greeks, the Italians, the British, the Arabs, and so on. These specifying adjectives clearly do not have a religious connotation, but rather linguistic, territorial or even ethnic ones. Even when the term is sometimes used in a more general sense, without further specification, as in the construction 'the language of a community' (luğat 'ummah), it is hard to read it with a religious connotation.

All the debaters are Christians, with the exception of the anonymous Al-Mumkin and Ḥ.Ḥ. who may or may not have been Christians, and the Damascene Literary Society, which had probably a Muslim membership. It is then not very likely that they would all mean the Islamic 'ummah in a phrase like 'the welfare of the 'ummah.' Most of them being Christians themselves, they would by definition be excluded. We might assume that the fact that 'ummah never completely lost its general connotation of 'community,' even when its most current meaning became 'religious community' or 'Islamic community,' allowed the Christian debaters to emphasize its secular connotations.

The fact that also Ḥusayn Al-Maṣṣaḥ, who was a shaykh at the Islamic University Al-ʿAzhar in Cairo, defined 'ummah, not only as a community of faith, but also as a community related by language and territory (Ayalon, 1987: 27), corroborates that this was a much broader tendency.

On the other hand, the use of 'ummah in this latter sense did not wipe out its religious connotations. As we will see in Chapter 8, the way in which Raṣīd Riddā uses the term clearly illustrates this.
The label ‘ważان’

Semantic development of the term ‘ważان’

Another label that deserves more attention is ‘ważان.’ Originally, the term was used to refer to the place where one was born or where one lives. During the 19th century, its meaning was extended with the sense of ‘fatherland’ or ‘patria,’ and sometimes also as ‘nation’ (Ayalon, 1987: 52; Tibi, 2000 (1981): 87). But, whereas ‘عُمْمَة’ refers to nation with the underlying sense of a community, ‘ważان’ rather has a geographical connotation.

Ayalon describes the development of its meaning as follows:

‘The noun ‘ważان,’ from the same root *w-t-n,* had long been a name for a place of residence, be it a village, a province or a country. During the nineteenth century, as the idea of patriotism appeared in the region, ‘ważان’ acquired the sense of ‘patriot,’ a word associated with strong sentiments of loving attachment and loyalty. A “patriot” was described as *‘يَبِنْ الْواضان,* “child of the homeland,” or by the adjectival noun ‘واجب,’ both served to denote local inhabitants of the ‘نَزَوْن’ – a unit easier to identify in Europe, where it simply referred to any recognizable country, than in the Ottoman Middle East. […] *‘يَبِنْ الْواضان* and ‘واجب’ gradually gained a political connotation during the latter part of the period. Being a patriot came to signify conscious identification with the homeland, a virtue highly commended and often quoted as an article of faith. Patriots, moreover, were said to have rights as well as duties in their homeland.’ (Ayalon, 1987: 52)

The use of the term ‘ważان’ in the debate

The term ‘ważان’ does not occur as often as ‘عُمْمَة’ in the debate, but is striking that the label ‘ważان’ and its adjective ‘واجب’ are always used in the debate with an emotional connotation.

The label occurs four times in combination with ‘love’ (*حَبَّ,* namely in the genitive construction ‘love for the fatherland’ (*حَبَّ الْواضان*) (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 495 [4]; Society, 1882a: 556 [10]; Dāgīr, 1882: 556 [2]).

In addition, it also occurs three times in the construction ‘the welfare of the fatherland’ (*حَبَّ الْواضان*) (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 354 [5], Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8], 621 [10]).

Moreover, both the noun ‘ważان’ and the adjective ‘واجب’ are used in combination with a verb, *جَرَاه* (or its verbal noun, *جاراه*), which means ‘to protect jealously.’ For instance, Ṣarrāf and Nimr refer to ‘the writers who protect jealously (ِيَغْرََٰن) the welfare of the fatherland’ (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 354 [5]) and Dāgīr refers to ‘patriotic zeal and Arab fervor’ (*قَارِهَة الْواضانَة wahْمَنْفاه* ‘ارابيْن’) (Dāgīr, 1882: 556 [3]). *Quandalaft* also refers to ‘the pure patriot’ (*الْواضانَة الْساَفِ) Quandalaft, 1882a: 694 [1]).
The labels ‘ḡīns’ (pl. ‘aḡnās) and ‘ḡinsīyah’

Semantic evolution of the terms ‘ḡīns’ and ‘ḡinsīyah’

Another term that is used in the debate to designate a human community is ‘ḡīns.’ The term ‘ḡinsīyah’ is a feminine nisbī-form that is derived from ‘ḡīns.’

According to Al-Bustānī, the term ‘ḡīns’ can be used in order to refer to general categories, which can be translated as ‘kind’ or ‘species,’ as well as more specific categories such as ‘gender’ or ‘race.’

‘Al-ḡīns, based on the opinions of the linguists: a species of everything, its plural is ‘aḡnās. It is more general than ‘naw’’. So one can say animals are a ḡīns and human beings are a naw, because it is more specific than horses, canels, and so on, even if it is a ḡīns in comparison to what comes under it, such as Zayd or Fāṭima, and so on. Those who claim the opposite say that human beings are a naw and that the black are a ḡīns.’ (Bustānī, 1870: 129)

Also in modern language use, the term ‘ḡīns’ is most often used to refer to ‘kind’ or species,’ as well as ‘gender’ and ‘race.’ Ghinsīyah became the most common word for ‘nationality.’

The use of the terms ‘ḡīns’ and ‘ḡinsīyah’ in the debate

The labels ‘ḡīns’ and ‘ḡinsīyah’ only occur once in the debate, namely in the article written by the Damascene Literary Society. The Society discusses one of the reasons why it prefers the second solution (namely, the replacement of the spoken language with the written):

‘[The third solution is also more adequate because of] its distance from the literary and political danger that is comprised in the second solution. I mean the effacement of the ḡinsīyah that heralds’ weakness, humility and inferiority, since the language of a nation is not lost unless it is lost itself and its ḡīns is obliterated.’ (Society, 1882: 553 [3])

It is hard to decide what the Society exactly means by the terms ‘ḡīns’ and ‘ḡinsīyah.’ We could interpret ‘ḡinsīyah’ as a ‘national community’ (Philipp, 1979: 98) and ‘ḡīns’ as an ‘ethnic community’ (Ayalon, 1987: 126).

However, the contexts in which the terms are used do not give us further evidence for this interpretation. Moreover, since the terms are used only once in the
debate, we lack further evidence for their exact meanings. It would be interesting, however, to investigate further the meanings and the use of these terms in order to know how important the ethnic connotation was in late nineteenth-century language use.

The label ‘bilād’
The debaters also refer to the Arab community with a term that has primarily geographic or territorial connotations, namely ‘bilād’ and once ‘budūn.’

Strictly grammatically seen, ‘bilād’ can be used both as a singular and a plural form. In classical texts, it is usually used in order to refer to a single territorial unit. In modern language use, it is usually used as the plural form of ‘balad’ (country).

Ayalon (1987) describes it as a ‘generic term for a territory of any type and size, broadly understood as a land’ (Ayalon, 1987: 18). Ayalon explains how during the nineteenth century the term was used to refer to both individual European countries, such as Italy (bilād ‘iṭaliyā), as well as larger units. As such, it was also used in order to refer ‘the country of the Franks’ (bilād al-'ifrangiyah), by which probably Europe was meant. (Note that this is reminiscent of the ways in which the term ‘ummah was used.)

The use of the term ‘bilād’ in the debate
In the context of the debate the most frequently used term is ‘bilād.’ It is used to refer to both European and Arab territories or regions.

For instance, Ṣarrāf and Nimr use the term to refer to Italy:

‘If the Italians were presently writing only in Latin, science would not be widespread in their country (bilād).’ (Ṣarrāf and Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])

But at the same time they use it to refer to a (further unspecified) Arab territory:

‘There is nothing that prevents us to follow their [example] and regulate the currently spoken language in the Arab region/land (al-bilād al-'arabiyyah) and to write our books in it.’ (Ṣarrāf and Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])

Al-Yaṣiṣṭ uses the term without adjectival specification, but from the context in which he uses the term we can conclude that he refers to an Arab territory:

‘So, whichever of these languages we choose to write in, it will take us to what we flee from. As such, in the frame of this pursuit, it is necessary to transform all the
languages of the region/lands (bilād) to one language (luğah wāhidah).’ (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 404 [2])

Dāgīr uses the term in a rather general way when referring to ‘the success of the bilād’ (naqaḍdum al-bilād) and ‘the progress of the bilād’ (tāqaddum al-bilād) (Dāgīr, 1882: 556 [1], [2]).

Al-Mumkin uses the term with the deictic clitic ‘our.’

‘[…] some of those who learned a foreign language (luğah ‘ağnabiyah) from the people of our region (bilād), such as Turkish (al-luğah al-turskiyāh), or French (al-luğah al-farsansāwiyāh), write it more correctly than they write Arabic. […]’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8])

At first sight, one might wonder what Al-Mumkin exactly means by ‘our bilād.’ Since at the time of the debate (1882) the Middle East was part of the Ottoman Empire, we might even think that Al-Mumkin means ‘the Ottoman bilād.’ However, this seems unlikely, since the foreign languages to which he refers are both French and Turkish. Though Turkish was the official language of the Ottoman Empire, he obviously does not consider Turkish to be a ‘native language’ to the bilād, which he refers to as ‘ours.’ Since students are said to write these foreign languages more correctly than Arabic, we can conclude by implication that bilād refers here to Arab bilād.

The debaters obviously preferred bilād to the unambiguously singular form ‘balad,’ which does not occur in the debate, and to the unambiguously plural form, ‘buldān,’ which only occurs twice in the debate.

‘There is nothing that prevents us to follow their [example] and regulate the currently spoken language in the Arab countries (fa-naqādat luğat al-takallum al-sā’i’ah fl’al-buldān al-arabīyah) and to write our books in it.’ (Sārrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])

And:

‘Who guarantees the feasibility of the unification of this language [e.g. the spoken language], that was dispersed to all the lands (hādīhi al-luğah al-laiti ḍahabat fl kull al-buldān ša‘imi‘īf).’ (Dāgīr, 1882: 558 [11])

It is remarkable that the unambiguous plural buldān is used both times in a reference to the diversity of al-‘āmmīyah. However, this is not always the case:
As such, in the frame of this pursuit, it is necessary to transform all the languages of the region/land (bilād) to one language ( lugah wāhidah). (Al-Yāzi̲nī̲, 1881: 404 [2])

In the context of the debate, bilād generally referred to an ‘Arab territory,’ within the Ottoman Empire, without making any further claims concerning its official status. ‘Al-bilād al-‘arabiyah’ can then be understood as an Arab territory within the Ottoman Empire, possibly with the underlying aspiration to make it an (independent) Arab territory as well.

When the debaters refer to sub-divisions of this territory, the use terms such as ‘quṭr’ (region), ‘muqāta’ah’ or ‘muḥāfiẓah’ (province), ‘madīnah’ town/city and ‘qariyāh’ (village). These smaller territorial or administrative units are often used in combination with references to al-‘āmmiyah, as if to stress its diversity and its limited (local) use.

Consider the following examples:

‘Concerning his argument that it is possible to unify the folk language despite that it is different in every region (quṭr)’ (Society, 1882a: 555 [7]).

And:

‘If we were able (hypothetically) to write a book in the Syrian language (al-lugah al-sūrīyah), for instance, would the Iraqi (al-‘irāq) benefit from it? Would the Maghribian (al-maġrib) not laugh with it? Would the Egyptian (al-miṣr) not ridicule it? The dialect of which province of Syria (lahgat ‘ayyāt muqāta’ah min sūrīyā) will we use, or rather which city (madīnah), or rather which village (qariyāh), or rather which neighborhood (hārah)?’ (Dāgīr, 1882: 557 [4])

Dāgīr also refers to his personal experiences in Ġabal Al-Nuṣayrīyah, (which is a mountainous region near Latakia), which is referred to as province (muḥāfiẓah) where the people were not able to understand Lebanese poetry:

‘they did not understand a thing of the mu’annā which is used by the people of Lebanon and its surrounding regions, and even though it is like the Mu’allaqāt of

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3 This is reminiscent to the ways in which ‘al-bilād al-‘arabiyah’ was used in classical texts. For instance, in texts written at the time when Abbaside Caliphate ruled an empire that was linguistically and ethnically diverse and that stretched over a vast territory, there references to an Arab region or territory, namely ‘al-bilād al-‘arabiyah.’

4 Brackets original.

5 A popular Lebanese unmetrical poem with end rhyme.
the folk language for the Lebanese (muta'allaqāt al-luğah al-'āmmiyah 'inda al-lubnānīyīn’) (Daṣīr, 1882: 557 [5])

He concludes:

‘The conclusion is that their language is nearer to al-faṣāḥah than it is to the other folk languages. Compare this province (muhāfaẓah) to the other province of Syria. Compare Syria to Iraq, the Maghrib and Egypt, and other [regions].’ (Daṣīr, 1882: 557 [5])

The term ‘dawlah,’ (government or state) also occurs a few times in the debate. The Society refers to the French state/government (dawlat firansā) (Society, 1882a: 554 [5]). Al-Mumkin refers to the Egyptian government (dawlat miṣr) (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [7]). In the latter example I gave preponderance to ‘government,’ because even if Egypt had obtained a large degree of independence and its governors had made their rule hereditary, officially it remained an Ottoman province. As such, it could not be considered an independent state at that time.

The contemporary Arab states were created as a result of the division of the Middle East into mandate regions after World War I. In contemporary language use, the most current terms to refer to them are balad (pl. bilād or buldān), qaṭr (pl. ‘aqṭār) and dawlah (pl. duwal).

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6 The Mu‘allaqāt are a famous collection of pre-Islamic poetry. For some reason Daṣīr calls them ‘Muta‘allaqāt.’
A LINGUISTIC BASIS FOR A NATIONAL COMMUNITY?

At the beginning of this chapter, I argued that in the debate the Arab community is primarily seen as a linguistic community. In this section I will investigate how this is achieved.

The relation between community/nation and language is most explicitly established in the article written by the Damascus Literary Society. First of all the Society explicitly relates the 'Arab community/nation' to its 'original' or 'authentic language' in the title of their article: 'The success of the Arab nation in its original language' (Nağah al-'ummah al-'arabiyah fi luğatihā al-'așliyāh).

This title has many implications. It indicates that the Society's point of departure is that there is an Arab community/nation and that this community/nation has its own original or authentic language, which is Arabic by implication. It is (the maintenance of) this language that will guarantee the success of the community/nation, on the condition that the Arabs are successful in it.7 (See also the analysis of the term 'al-luğah al-aṣliyāh in Chapter 4.)

The suggestions made in the title receive explicit attention in the introduction of the article. First of all the Damascus Literary Society states that there is a general consensus that the human being is the quintessence of creation and that he distinguishes himself from other animals by 'nuṭq' and 'bayān'. 'Nuṭq' is then defined as 'consciuosness of all things' (iḍrāk al-'umr al-kulliyah) and 'bayān' as 'the expression of what lives in his mind so that others of his species can benefit from it', (al-ta'bīr 'ummā fi ādamirihī li-'ifādat bāni naw'ihi). Only human beings have these two characteristics, though not all to the same degree (Society, 1882: 551-552 [1]).

Depending on the variable extent to which every community/nation ('ummah) and every individual (fard) possesses these characteristics, they are clearly differentiated (mutaṣfāwītātān tasfūwītān bāyyītan). Human communities/nations ('umām) and individuals ('afāḍ) are differentiated as regards excellence (fādîl) and perfection (kamāl) and this is recognized by spontaneous thinking and traditional knowledge (Society, 1882: 551-552 [1]).

So, in the opinion of the Damascus Literary Society language (al-nuṭq wa al-bayān) is not only the differentiating characteristic of, but also between, human beings and human communities. The quality of individuals and of nations can be derived from the quality of their language.

The Damascus Literary Society then continues paying specific attention to the position of the Arabs and the Arabic language.

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7 Note the double meaning of the title 'Nağah al-'ummah al-'arabiyah fi luğatihā al-'arabiyah,' which refers to the success of the Arab community in its language and its success by means of it.
Langauge and identity construction

‘For the people with sound character and straight thinking it is confirmed that the Arabs have the largest share of these two characteristics [al-nuṣṣ wa al-bayān]. Therefore their minds are the most superior minds and their language is the clearest language. The first [point] is uncontestably accepted by Westerners and Easterners and the books of both communities (kutub al-’ummatayn)⁸ are in agreement about this. Concerning the second [point], it is acknowledged by everybody who has studied the Arabic language and some other languages. Persian, Turkish and Greek scholars who have studied Arabic announce this publicly and they are not afraid to be blamed for this. This has been singled out in the writings of some of the erudite people, in ancient and modern times. Among them is the editor of Al-Ǧawa’ib⁹, [who confirmed this] in a book of him in which he compared the Arabic language with Western languages and demonstrated the uniqueness of the first in its excellence, despite that he studied both in detail. Many excellent scholars have done this.’ (Society, 1882: 552 [1])

In this paragraph the Damascene Literary Society gives a clearly psychological and cognitive dimension to language, by suggesting that linguistic superiority is related to psychological/mental superiority. The Society then considers Arabic as one of the superior languages, not only because of its inherent linguistic characteristics, but also because of the literary production in Arabic. The author insists that this is not merely his personal opinion, but that other scholars, Arabs and non-Arabs alike, confirm this.

What the Damascene Literary Society does in this elaborate introduction is more than just clearing the ground for its arguments concerning the linguistic question. As already stated above, some arguments can be clearly labeled as ‘nationalist.’ Language is seen as an important characteristic of individuals as well as communities/nations. The Society also tries to establish the superiority of the Arabs, psychologically (they have superior minds), linguistically (their language is the most eloquent language), and scientifically (they have a great literary heritage consisting of an enormous amount of scientific works, although a lot of it is lost). In its opinion, nobody can deny this achievement, not even the Westerners, who despite the fact that they are dominant at the time of writing, rely on this Arab scientific heritage. Those Westerners who are aware of it acknowledge its worth. The Damascene Literary Society argues that even discoveries that are usually considered to be Western achievements were actually already discussed in Arab

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⁸ Note that Easterners and Westerners are seen here as two different nations, meaning that Easterners as a are considered as considered as a communities/nations as well as the Westerners.

⁹ The editor of the Arabic periodical Al-Ǧawa’ib was Ahmad Fāris Al-Šidyāṣ (1804-1887/8). He was of Lebanese Maronite origin, but after having converted to Protestantism, he converted to Islam, hence his name Ahmad. He was active as a journalist, translator and linguist.
scientific works. The Society thus tries to establish equality, if not superiority, in relation to the West.

'It was the painstaking care of the scholars (‘ulamā’) at the Arabic language (al-luqāḥ al-‘arabīyah) that made them write about its vocabulary (mufradātuhā), its syntax (ṣūnaluhā) and specific characteristics (ḥaṣā’īṣuhā) as many books as the stars, so that the mind can almost judge that they did not lose any detail of it. Something similar has never happened for another [language]. They also wrote on the several sciences, crafts and arts in Arabic, [so much] that it confuses the mind, despite the fact that a lot of it has gone with the wind and was scattered with the debris of storms. Despite their claim that they arrived at the highest top of the sciences, the Westerners still borrow from [these works], study what remains of them, spend a lot of money to purchase them and effort to copy them.' (Society, 1882: 552 [2])

The Society then mentions an anecdote according to which

'a translator of the French army informed the Geographical Society in Paris about the presence of thousands of precious Arabic books in Kairouan and [said] that interest in the translation of some of these valuable books would offer the French community/nation (al-‘ummah al-fransāwīyah) advantages that it would never have counted on. He requested [the Geographic Society] to inform the leaders of the above-mentioned army to trail these precious vestiges and to seize everything that helps to [acquire them] whatever it takes. The one who read 'Kaṣf al-ẓunūn ‘an ‘aṣmā’ al-kutub wa al-funūn' knows for certain what we have said despite that it is not possible for him to investigate [it] thoroughly, because it is impossible.' (Society, 1882: 552 [2])

The Society then tries to further amplify the scientific superiority of the Arabs:

'We still see in the Arabic books that we have with us, despite their scarceness, issues of which the Westerners claim that they have discovered them. The excuse they have for this is that they did not investigate [these Arabic books]. These days we see in Damascus epistles of one of the Arab philosophers, in some of them he mentioned general gravity, of which the Westerners claimed that the first to investigate it was one of their later philosophers, mentioning that it offered philosophy enormous advantages. Since this is something about which people do not disagree we content ourselves with this scope in order to be brief and concise.' (Society, 1882: 552 [2])

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10 Quotation marks mine. The book is a bibliographical work written by Ḥāgī Ḥalīfah (Constantinople, 1608-1657). The book is said to contain some 15,000 names of Arab writers.
Moreover, in the same article the Society considers the second option, namely the replacement of the written language by the spoken language, not only a literary danger (mahādīr 'adabī), but also a political danger (mahādīr siyāsī), by which they mean:

'I mean the effacement of the ǧinsiyyah that heralds weakness, humility and inferiority, since the language of a community/nation is not lost unless it [the community/nation] is lost itself and its ǧins is obliterated. By oblation we do not mean physical oblation, but mental oblation, which is for people with a taste bitterer than the first, provided that [the latter] is the main cause of [the first]. This is what happened to the people of Malta, and everybody knows who they are.' (Society, 1882: 553 [3])

Despite his completely different position in the debate, Al-Mumkin states in his reaction to the article of the Society that he does not disagree with the first two arguments of the Society:

'First, the superiority of the Arabs and Arabic. I do not dispute this and I did and do not deny it. There is no debate about this at all.
Secondly, that the scholars wrote books on Arabic which can compete with the stars in number, and that they wrote in it [Arabic] on the sciences, crafts and arts what confuses the thoughts. I also do not dispute this.' (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 618 [2])

Moreover the link between community/nation ('ummah) and language is often indirectly confirmed in the debate.

Consider for instance the following paragraph written by Qandalaf:

'Concerning his reasoning that it is possible to refine the folk language (taḥṭīb lughat al-ʿummah) in the way as some communities did with their languages (bi-mā ḥaʻalat baʿd al-ʿumam ʾfī lughātihi): after examining it, we do not consider it adequate for what it is aimed at. [...] What becomes clear to us is that the comparison between the Arabs and their language with these communities and their languages (qiyyās al-ʿarab ʾwa lughātihi ʿalā ḥāṭik al-ʿumam ʾwa lughātihi) is incomplete and deficient. (Qandalaf, 1882a: 696 [6]) [emphasis mine]

By his use of person deixis Qandalaf implicitly confirms the ideas which the Damascene Literary Society discussed in detail, namely that the basis of a community/nation is its language.

Moreover, even though Qandalaf does not use the term 'al-ʿummah al-ʿarabīyyah,' by comparing 'some communities and their languages' to the 'Arabs and their language,' it is obvious that he does consider it a community/nation.
Also the link between political decadence and linguistic decadence is implicitly referred to by Şarrāf and Nimr when they state

'For instance, the Latin language became corrupted (fasadat) during the period of the decline of the Roman state.' (Şarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])

Moreover, they relate linguistic decadence to scientific and cultural decadence.

'Or we write our books in the language we speak, in the same way as the Italians, the Greeks and other communities whose languages became corrupted in the course of time and the reign of the night of ignorance did. Then, when the suns of science returned to them they saw no way restitute their ancient languages and they contended themselves with the current languages at that moment. They refined/revised them and wrote their books in them.' (Şarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3])

One language for the Arabs, ...

After constructing the Arab community as a linguistic community, the participants also (implicitly) agree that this community needs to maintain its linguistic unity in order to survive.

I already mentioned that despite all differences of opinion in the debate, there is an unspoken consensus between all the participants that the Arabs or the speakers of Arabic are in need of a maintained linguistic unity, e.g. one written standard language. This appears clearly from the way in which Şarrāf and Nimr first presented the linguistic problem and its solutions. In their opinion the linguistic problem is the large difference between the spoken and the written language. In order to solve this problem they present three solutions. Either the Arabic language has to be replaced by a foreign language, or the written language has to be replaced by the spoken language, or the spoken language has to be replaced by the written language (Şarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 553-4).

This presentation of the solutions suggests that only one language variety can be used for both writing and speaking, and this for all speakers of Arabic. These premises, namely the large difference between the spoken and the written language and the fact that this difference is problematic, as well as the suggestion that one and only one variety has to be used for both speaking and writing, are not questioned by the other participants. They only develop their opinions based on these premises, about which there is, therefore, an implicit consensus.

For instance, Al-Yazīği dismisses the (hypothetical) proposal that Arabic must be replaced by a foreign language by arguing as follows:

'Concerning the first proposal, namely the replacement of our language with another language, it is generally known that it is of no advantage for the mentioned aim, if
this replacement does not comprise the language of speech as well. And this is completely impossible.’ (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 404 [2])

Again, this strongly indicates that the Arabs must use only one language, namely Arabic, both in writing and speaking.

Moreover, Al-Yāziği continues discussing the second solution, namely the replacement of the written language by the spoken language:

‘Moreover, if we would approve of this opinion and intended [to apply it], which language of the folk languages would we use, since between each of these languages and its sister there is a difference qua pronunciation (lahğah) and conventions (‘awādī’), which is at least as large as the difference between each of them and al-luğah al-faṣihah. So, whichever of these languages we choose to write in, it will take us to what we flee from. As such, in the frame of this pursuit, it is necessary to transform all the languages of the region/lands (bilād) to one language (luğah wāhiḍah).’ (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 404 [2])

In this paragraph Al-Yāziği refers to the differences between the folk languages as an argument against using one of them as a writing language. However, what is most important for our purposes here is that Al-Yāziği does not even consider the idea of using more than one folk language as a written language. This means that he does not discuss the idea to then dismiss it. The suggestion simply does not occur to him and certainly does not deserve to be mentioned.

The idea of one language for all the Arabs is also shared by Al-Mumkin, despite the fact that he defends the proposal that the spoken language should replace the written language. However, again it is clear that he has only one spoken language or luğah ‘āmmiyah in mind for all the Arabs. In his reaction to Al-Yāziği’s opinion he writes:

‘Concerning his opinion about using the folk language, that with the difference between the dialects of the Syrians, the Egyptians, the Iraqis and the Maghribians it is difficult: it is, even though this difficulty is correct, as in the opinion of the respected [Al-Yāziği], what happened in Arabic itself, not to say that it happened in all languages. Does he not see that correct Arabic is the collection of the different linguistic variants of the Arab tribes12 and that the multitude of names for one designation is an unmistakable indication that it is a collection of linguistic variants of different tribes? This is obvious for the one who has the slightest knowledge of

11 In the original text the word ‘ṣa‘b’ (difficult) is not mentioned. However, in a note in his second article Al-Mumkin mentions that ‘ṣa‘b’ was dropped after the word ‘mağribiyin.’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 621)

12 Or: ‘the linguistic variants of the different Arab tribes.’
the science of language. In the same way as it was possible for the scholars of the first centuries of the Hijra to collect/unify ancient Arabic despite their limited means, it is possible for the scholars of this epoch to collect/unify folk Arabic and to regulate it. Especially since the possible means for this are many times as much as they were then. (Al-Munkin, 1882a: 494 [2])

So, despite the fact that Al-Munkin takes a completely different position in the debate, he implicitly shares the idea of linguistic unity.

Also the Damascene Literary Society further supports the notion of one language for all the Arabs. Above we discussed the ways in which it tried to establish a firm connection between linguistic, psychological and cultural/scientific qualities of both individual human beings and human communities. When a human being or community loses its language, it means that it loses its identity. It argues against the use of the folk language as a written language, because

‘the folk languages are clearly very different and their unification into one language is unfeasible. [Even] if we presuppose its possibility, than it is still more adequate to return them to the original language (‘irāqa’uha ilā al-luqāh al-aṣliyāh), […]’ (Society, 1882: 553 [4])

Again, the use of more than one folk language is not even suggested.

The rejection of the proposal to use the folk language as a written language is also confirmed by Dāgin:

‘Each of these languages is different qua pronunciation and conventions as a foreign language is in comparison to other languages. If we were able (hypothetically)¹³ to write a book in the Syrian language, for instance, would the Iraqi benefit from it? Would the Maghribian not laugh at it? Would the Egyptian not ridicule it? The dialect of which province of Syria will we use, or rather which city, or rather which village, or rather which neighborhood? For the respected Al-Munkin knows that in Syria itself there are several folk languages (luqāt šatā ‘āmmiyāt) that differ mutually from each other as much as al-luqāh al-faṣīhah differs from the folk languages.’ (Dāgin, 1882: 557 [4])

It is clear that Dāgin is keenly aware of the linguistic variability in Arabic. We already referred to the fact that he cites both comprehension problems and attitudinal problems against the use of one of the folk languages as a writing language.

Despite this awareness of these differences, it does not occur to him to discuss the possibility of using, for instance, (here I follow Dāgin’s terminology),

¹³Brackets original.
the Syrian language for the Syrians, the Iraqi language for the Iraqis, the Egyptian language for the Egyptians, and so on. His rejection is based on the assumption that a text written in Syrian would be presented to and eventually be rejected by Iraqis, Egyptians, and Maghrubians.

... but, who is Arab?
All the debaters are convinced of the existence of an Arab community (‘umma ʿarabiyah) and an Arab territory (bilad ‘arabiyah). This community is discursively constructed as a linguistic community, as is exemplified by the phrase, ‘we, the speakers of Arabic’ (nahna al-mutakallimūn bi-al-luqah al-ʿarabiyah) (Ṣarruf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [2]). We also saw that the debaters used a territorial term, namely ‘al-bilad al-‘arabiyah,’ which could be translated as ‘the Arab territory,’ without further specifications.

We might wonder, then, whether there are not more specific indications of who is considered Arab and who is not. However, again, this issue is not directly discussed. Nevertheless, there are some implicit indications which give us an idea of which regions were supposed to be included into the (vague) notion of ‘Arab territory’ (al-bilad al-‘arabiyah). As we will see territorial and linguistic factors merge in this context.

For instance, Al-Mumkin refers to his conviction that the dialects of the Syrians, the Egyptians, the Iraqis and the Maghrubians, can be turned into one language. Thus Al-Mumkin indirectly indicates that these regional groups are included in his notion of an ‘Arab community.’ It is clear that he considers these four groups to be ‘Arabs,’ although at the same time he obviously distinguishes between them.

‘Concerning his opinion about using the folk language, that with the difference between the dialects of the Syrians (al-sūriyūn), the Egyptians (al-miṣriyūn), the Iraqis (al-‘irāqīyūn) and the Maghrubians (al-maġribīyūn) it is difficult: it is, even though this difficulty is correct, as in the opinion of the respected [Al-Yaṣīṭī], what happened in Arabic itself, not to say that it happened in all languages.’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [2])

Moreover, it is very important, once more, to draw attention to the fact that Al-Mumkin considers unifying the varieties of the groups he refers to into one language and not the standardization of, for instance, four different languages. Thus we can conclude that he considers the four groups, although distinguishable, to be part of one larger unity or linguistic community that is in need of one language.

By comparing his contemporary (nineteenth-century) situation to the early Islamic situation, Al-Mumkin somehow equates the Syrians, Egyptians, Iraqis and
Maghribians with the pre-Islamic tribes, or at least he draws a parallel between them. As such, he somehow sees them as ‘modern tribes’ being part of one larger unity, the Arab linguistic community. (The historical dimensions and implications of this argument will be discussed in detail in the next section.)

‘Does he not see that correct Arabic is the collection of the different linguistic variants of the Arab tribes and that the multitude of names for one designation is an unmistakable indication that it is a collection of linguistic variants of different tribes? This is obvious for the one who has the slightest knowledge of the science of language. In the same way as it was possible for the scholars of the first centuries of the Hijra to collect/unify ancient Arabic despite their limited means, it is possible for the scholars of this epoch to collect/unify folk Arabic and to regulate it. Especially since the possible means for this are many times as much as they were then.’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [2])

Dāğır, while referring to possible comprehension and attitudinal problems, also gives us an indication of which regional groups are included into the Arab community and territory, according to him. Note that he refers to exactly the same groups as Al-Mumkin.

‘If we were able (hypothetically) to write a book in the Syrian language (al-luğah al-sūrīyah), for instance, would the Iraqi (al-‘irāqī) benefit from it? Would the Maghrībian (al-maġribī) not laugh at it? Would the Egyptian (al-miṣrī) not ridicule it? (Dāğır, 1882: 557 [4])

Even if later in the article (in his anecdote about his teaching experience in Ġabal al-Nuṣayrīyah), Dāğır also refers to Lebanon (lubnān), it seems that he considers it a unit with a status different from the units he mentions above. Otherwise he would probably have listed it in this enumeration.

‘If I recited to them a line of poetry they were very at much ease to listen to it, despite that it belongs to the peculiarities of al-luğah al-fasīḥah, while they did not understand a thing of the mu‘ammā which is used by the people of Lebanon (‘ahl lubnān) and its surrounding regions, and even though it is like the Muta‘allaqāt of the folk language for the Lebanese (muta‘allaqāt al-luğah al-‘ammah ‘inda al-lubnānīyīn). The conclusion is that their language (lugatuhum) is nearer to al-fasīḥah than it is to the other folk languages (baqiyat al-luğat al-‘ammīyah). Compare this province (muḥāfaẓah) to the other provinces of Syria. Compare Syria to Iraq, the Maghrib and Egypt, and other [regions].’ (Dāğır, 1882: 557 [5])

14 Brackets original.
Another one of Dāgir’s references is important:

‘But the faṣīḥah language of civilization is the same (lūgāt al-haḍārah al-faṣīḥah hiyā hiyā) in Egypt, Syria, the Maghrib, Iraq, in its morphology, grammar and all its literature, unless some rare exceptions, in contrast with the folk language. Its pronunciation is diverse (lahgatuhā muljatîfah) and its conventions are diverse (‘awdâ’uhā mutabâ‘înînâh). The Syrian laughs at the dialect/pronunciation of the Egyptian (lahgah al-mixrî), and the Egyptian with that of the Maghribian, the Maghribian with that of the Iraqi, and the Iraqi with that of the Syrian.’ (Dāgir, 1882: 558 [7])

H. H. adds an extra argument:

‘But [for] the folk language there is no incentive for its unification, since the Aleppan (al-halabi) does not see the necessity of giving preponderance to the language of the Damascene (lūgāt al-shâ‘imî), in addition to the Iraqi (al-‘irâqî), for instance. Neither does he see the necessity of mixing his language, which he sucked with the milk of his childhood with the language of another (lūgāt ā‘wirî). In contrast to what it is asked from him to replace [his language] with the Mu’ārî language (al-lūgah al-mudârîyâh), of which he thinks that it is the noblest language (‘aṣrâf al-lūgât) and that it is one of the means for obtaining his happiness. He would not hesitate [to do this] if it were possible, even with great efforts and spending money, in addition that he considers this easy and easy to achieve.’ (H. H., 1882: 693 [8])

This means that in H. H.’s opinion it is not simply enough for the Arabs to have one common language. The common language for the Arabs has to be what he calls the Mu’ārî language, or al-lūgah al-faṣîḥah. Most debaters share this opinion, with the exception of Al-Munkin, while Ṣarrâf and Nimr take a quite ambiguous position.

H. H. argues that no Arab would accept to replace his own spoken language with the spoken language of another region. This same Arab would also not accept that his language would be mixed with elements from other spoken varieties of Arabic. H. H. further argues that this same Arab would have no problem at all replacing his spoken language with al-faṣîḥah because this is in his opinion the noblest of all languages.

In the previous chapter I investigated the idea of the inherent inferiority of the folk language and the inherent superiority of al-faṣîḥah, which is shared by all participants with the exception of Al-Munkin. This is one of their arguments against using the spoken language as a written language.

However, the idea that al-faṣîḥah is superior to the folk language(s) is not the only reason why the majority of the debaters prefer it to be the written language
for all the Arabs and why they want it to replace the spoken language in speech. In the following section I will further investigate some other underlying reasons for this preference.
THE HISTORICAL DIMENSIONS OF LINGUISTIC VIEWS

Introduction
In the previous section, I demonstrated how the debaters discursively tried to establish an Arab community, basically defined as a linguistic community. I mainly paid attention to how all the debaters considered the Arabic language to be a bond relating all contemporary Arabs to each other.

We saw that this was the case both for the defenders of the written language, al-‘arabiyah al-faṣīḥah and the only defender of the spoken language, al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah, namely Al-Mumkin. I concluded then that the difference of opinion was not so much about whether the Arabs need one common language or not, but rather which variety of Arabic this common language had to be, namely al-‘āmmiyah or al-faṣīḥah.

This difference of opinion about which variety of Arabic should be the language relating all Arabs to each other is a very important one.

In this section, I will try to demonstrate that the difference in position is mainly based on a different historical view of the development of Arabic, as well as a different stance toward the so-called Arabic literary heritage.

We will see that Al-Mumkin has his own particular view of the development of al-‘arabiyah al-faṣīḥah. This opinion is not altogether refuted by the other participants, but it is clear that at the same time they feel quite uncomfortable about it.

We will also see that the defenders of the use of the written language attach a lot of value to the Arabic literary heritage, while Al-Mumkin opts firmly for a new beginning.

Historical views of the development of Arabic
As I discussed in the previous section, Al-Mumkin defended the idea of unifying and standardizing the currently spoken languages into one new spoken language.

He sustains this argument by arguing that this is exactly the same as what took place during the first centuries of Islam. He argues that the currently written language, to which he refers here as Arabic (al-‘arabiyah), correct Arabic (al-‘arabiyah al-ṣaḥīḥah), and ancient Arabic (al-‘arabiyah al-qadīmah), was itself the end product of the same unification and standardization process as the one he proposes for the contemporary spoken language.

'Concerning his opinion about using the folk language, that with the difference between the dialects of the Syrians, the Egyptians, the Iraqis and the Maghribians, it is difficult; it is, even though this difficulty is correct, as in the opinion of the respected [Al-Yāṣṣī], what happened in Arabic itself, not to speak of that it happened in all languages. Does he not see that correct Arabic is the collection of
the different linguistic variants of the Arab tribes and that the multitude of names for one designation is an unmistakable indication that it is a collection of linguistic variants of different tribes? This is obvious for the one who has the slightest knowledge of the science of language. In the same way as it was possible for the scholars of the first centuries of the Hijra to collect ancient Arabic despite their limited means, it is possible for the scholars of this epoch to collect folk Arabic and to regulate it. Especially since the possible means for this are many times as much as it were then.' (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [2])

Thus Al-Mumkin introduces a clearly historical argument into the debate, by referring to the codification and standardization of Arabic during the first centuries after the revelation of the Koran. Al-Mumkin refers indirectly to Islam, by using the phrase ‘the scholars of the first centuries of the Hijra.’

The Damascene Literary Society reacts to this argument as follows:

‘Concerning his argument that it is possible to unify the folk language despite that it is different in every country (quṣr), in analogy with the unification of the different variants (lugar) of the Arab tribes. After accepting that the canonized language is a collection of different variants (lugar), it is a false analogy because of the absence of the impetus for this and the lack of motives [for this]. The one who has read the history books knows this.’ (Society, 1882a: 555 [7])

It is clear that the Society does not wholeheartedly accept Al-Mumkin’s argument that the written language is a collection of linguistic varieties that were spoken by the Arab tribes. However, the Society does not refute the claim explicitly. It seems not to consider the argument very important one since it does not discuss it at length. For the sake of the debate, the Society is prepared to accept it as a hypothesis. But even if it is hypothetically accepted, the Society argues, it cannot be used as an argument for the unification and standardization of the contemporary (here: nineteenth-century) spoken Arabic varieties, since the impetus for the unification and standardization of the tribal varieties is absent in their time.

The Society does not mention explicitly which was the actual impetus for the unification and standardization of the tribal languages. However, it is quite clear that it considers Islam as the main factor.

I am not sure why the Society does not mention Islam explicitly. It is possible that it considers this to be such an obvious fact that it does not need mentioning. Another reason might be that the Society is aware of the fact that it is writing for Al-Muqtataf, a journal that was published by Christians and that had a

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15 The Hijra refers to Muhammad’s migration from Mecca to Yathrib, a town that later was to be called Medina in 622 AC. This date is considered the beginning of the Muslim era.
wide Christian reading public. Moreover, the general tendency of Al-Muqtatof was secular. That may be why the Society did not want to focus too much on Islam in its discussion of the arguments.

I also want to draw attention to the fact that this is one of the few times in the debate when Islam, or religion in general, is referred to and used as an argument to sustain a certain position. Even then the reference is very vague and almost implicit. Religious arguments, or rather the general lack thereof, will be treated separately below.

Another point that I want to refer to here is the use of the linguistic label ‘al-luğah al-‘aṣliyyah’ (the original language or the authentic language). This label was used for the first time by the Society in the title of their article. I referred already to the different connotations of this term before. (See Chapter 4) I just want to remind the reader that the use of the term ‘al-luğah al-‘aṣliyyah,’ also implies a certain historical view of the development of the written language or al-faṣiḥah. By saying that this variety is the authentic language, it is somehow implied that it is basic and original, and even primordial. The view that al-faṣiḥah is somehow primordial cannot be reconciled with the view that the written language was actually created by the human effort of unification and standardization. As such, we can consider it an indirect refutation of Al-Mumkin’s opinion.

The view of the primordiality of al-faṣiḥah is also reminiscent of the dominant Islamic vision of al-‘arabīyah al-faṣiḥah the language in which the Koran was revealed. However, again this reference is not directly made in the article itself.

Moreover, the term al-luğah al-‘aṣliyyah is used in combination with the suggestion that the spoken languages have to be returned or brought back (‘irgā‘ - radd) to it. For instance, Al-Yazıği states that it is ‘better and easier to return the languages to al-luğah al-faṣiḥah.’ (Al-Yazıği, 1881: 404 [2]) This argument is also repeated by the Society which states ‘returning (‘irgā‘) them [the spoken languages] to the original language (al-luğah al-‘aṣliyyah) is then better.’ (Society, 1882a: 553 [4])

This is related to the widespread idea that the spoken or the folk languages originated as deviations from al-faṣiḥah, the authentic or the original language (al-luğah al-‘aṣliyyah). Moreover, this deviation is often described as fasād (corruption) of speech caused by the mixing of the Arabs with non-Arab peoples.

Ibn Haydān (who was also quoted by Al-Mumkin and H.H) gives a good summary of this idea in a paragraph that was not quoted in the debate:

‘The linguistic habit of the Muhār became corrupt when they came into contact with non-Arabs. The reason for that corruption was that the generation growing up heard other ways of expressing things they wanted to express than the Arab (ways). They
used to express what they wanted to express, because there were so many non-Arabs coming into contact with the Arabs. They also heard the ways in which the Arabs expressed themselves. As a result, matters became confused for them. They adopted (ways of expressing themselves) from both sides. Thus, there originated a new habit which was inferior to the first one. This is what is meant by "corruption of the Arabic language." (Ibn Ḥaldūn, via Rosenthal, 1967: (3) 343).

Qandalaft also makes the distinction between primordial authentic languages and varieties that are seen as corrupted deviations. This corruption is caused by the mixing of the speakers of these original languages with people who speak other languages.

"What becomes clear to us is that the comparison of the Arabs and their language with these communities and their languages (hātik al-‘umam wa lugātihim) is incomplete and deficient (nāqiṣ manqūd). Because their change was because of political motives (dawrāʾin siyāsīyāh), such as the invasion of Northern European tribes (qabā’il simlāt ‘urābāt) against the Romans (al-rūmānīyāt) and their mixing with them (iḥtīlātuhum bi-him). So [their] original language (al-lugāh al-‘āṣīyah) became corrupted among the folk people and it became a mixture of different languages (bi-hayy_‘asfudat al-lugāh al-‘āṣīyah ‘inda al-‘ummah fa-‘asbhāt mazīqin min lugāt muḥtaliṣfah) which is hard to decompose and of which the roots are hard to diffuse/generalize. But our language (lugātunā) was not overcome by what happened to these [languages], thank God, and it did not arrive to this bad situation. If someone answered that the language of the Greeks for instance deviates from what we said, then we ask him what is the proof against the possibility of the general spread of classical Greek if the decision makers aspire to this and start to publish classical works and to start using it in the schools, as the speakers of Arabic (‘ahl al-‘arabīyah) want to now. If he answered against this that the means to do this were not available in ancient times, we say that they are available now to us in this epoch, thanks to the Benefactor. We only need determined minds and determined wills that proceed and feet that are planted in the demands of each useful discipline. We only need united hearts and hands helping each other to spread science and the extension of its scope among the elite and the folk people (naṣr al-‘ilm wa tavṣir niyāqīhi bayna al-ḥaṣṣ wa al-‘āmm). If we neglect the benefaction by our restraint and reject it by our negligence, we are like the hungry who refuses bread or the sick who hates the medicine." (Qandalaft, 1882a: 696 (6))

In this paragraph Qandalaft also contrasts the development of Latin and the Romance languages with the development of Arabic and Greek varieties. In his opinion, Latin were corrupted by the mixing of the Romans with Northern Europeans. On the other hand, Greek and Arabic also were corrupted, but not to such an extent that this corruption is irreversible. As such, according to Qandalaft, the Romance languages can no longer be reverted to their origin, Latin, while
Modern Greek and spoken Arabic can be reverted to Classical Greek and written Arabic or al-fasīḥah, respectively.

Before, I argued that Qandalaft uses this as an argument against the idea that the Arabic folk language can be standardized in the same way as the folk languages of other peoples or nations were standardized. (See also Chapter 4)

"Concerning his reasoning that it is possible to refine the folk language (taḥqīb luqāt al-ʿāmmah) in the way as some communities did with their languages (bi-mā faʿalat baʿd al-ʿumam fi luqātihim): after examining it, we do not consider it adequate for what it is aimed at." (Qandalaft, 1882a: 696 [6])

He further argues that is not impossible in a practical sense, but rather impossible in the sense that is harmful.

"The one who denies the possibility does not [necessarily] deny that it is possible in general (and the ratio is guidance)\(^{16}\), because it is an accepted fact that it is possible that the human being does [things] that harm him, out of ignorance or foolishness and that God condemns a complete community (ʿummah bi-ʿaṣrīhā) to humiliation. Its governors and its advisors convince it [the community] of a matter that moves it into the abyss of humility and the lowest levels of decline. It is most obvious that the claim of who stated the impossibility of this possible is relative and built on [the idea] that (the possible that is harmful is impossible qua benefit).\(^{17}\) (Qandalaft, 1882a: 696 [6])

The anonymous H.H. makes more explicit what the impetus for the unification and standardization of al-fasīḥah was, even though he did not accept this idea wholeheartedly.

He wrote the paragraph quoted below as a reaction to Al-Mumkin's complaint that nobody took his argument serious that al-fasīḥah actually is the end product of a unification and standardization process.

"[T]heir disregard toward my statement that Arabic is a collection of the variants of the Arabs (al-ʿarabiyyah maqṭūmah luqāt al-ʿarab), as if it does not support examination or does not have any force to confirm the second method, despite that it is the greatest proof for the feasibility of the unification/collection of the folk language. (gamʿ luqāt al-ʿāmmah)." (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [6])

After repeating Al-Mumkin’s statement, H.H reacts:

\(^{16}\) Brackets original.

\(^{17}\) Brackets original.
The eminent Al-Munkin said, sixthly, "disregard toward my statement that Arabic is a collection of the lugāt of the Arabs, as if it does not support examination," and so on.

I say, this is strikingly astonishing. The Literary Society, even if it disregarded it because of the disagreement about this among scholars, it accepted it for the sake of argument and it asserted, on the premise of accepting it, that this would not benefit the opponent because of the lack of instigation for this and the lack of fulfillment of the requirements. Because the different languages of the Arabs were unified by a religious and political incentive, if it is confirmed that it is a collective of several variants! But [for] the folk language there is no incentive for its unification, since the Aleppan (al-halabi) does not see the necessity of giving preponderance to the language of the Damascene (lugāt al-sāmi), in addition to the Iraqi (al-‘irāqi) for instance. Neither does he see the necessity of mixing his language, which he sucked with the milk of his childhood with the language of another. In contrast to when it is asked from him to replace [his language] with the Mudarri language (al-lugāh al-mudarriyah), of which he thinks that it is the noblest language (‘āraf al-lugāt) and that it is one of the means for [obtaining] his happiness. He would not hesitate [to do this] if it were possible, even with great efforts and spending money, in addition to the fact that he considers this easy and easy to achieve. This clearly demonstrates that the Society substantiated its claim, on the premise that it is proved that the language used by the Arabs is a collection of languages." (H.H., 1882: 693 [8]) [emphasis mine]

H.H. refers to the fact that scholars do not agree about Al-Munkin's contention that al-fasṭḥah was created by the unification and standardization of the tribal languages of the Arabs. This suggests that this hypothesis was discussed among scholars.

These scholars were Arab scholars (both Muslims and Christians), as well as Orientalist scholars, with whose works Arab intellectuals were often acquainted. Some of these intellectuals even worked closely together with some of these Orientalist scholars.

Despite his reservations, H.H. also indicates that there was a religious and political incentive for the unification of the tribal varieties, but, again without further explanation and without explicitly mentioning Islam. H.H. also repeats the argument that such a religious and political motivation for the unification of the contemporary spoken Arabic varieties does not apply in his days. Thus H.H. also suggests that the project of unifying and standardizing the contemporary spoken varieties into one language is doomed to failure.

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18 Quotation marks mine.
He underscores this position by referring to the attitudinal objections of the contemporary speakers themselves, who would never accept to replace their own vernacular with somebody else’s or to mix their vernacular with somebody else’s. In H.H.’s opinion, the contemporary speaker would only be prepared to give up his own vernacular in order to replace it with al-faṣīḥah, since it is considered the noblest language (‘aṣrafa ḥ-luḡāt).

As we have seen in Chapter 1, this is also often the opinion of many twentieth-century speakers when explicitly consulted. However, sociolinguistic research also has demonstrated that speakers in certain contexts often do give up their own vernaculars in favor of other more prestigious ones, and not necessarily in favor of al-faṣīḥah.

Al-Mumkin defends himself:

‘Concerning the second part of his reaction, my answer to it is that if he is not convinced by what Al-Muqattat and I wrote concerning the possibility of the refining/revising the folk language (taḥqīb luḡāt al-‘āmmah) and the priority of using it, I think that I can only write a book in which I demonstrate to him and all those who support him in his statement, that the Arabic language and all the languages of the world adhere to changing century after century, year after year, day after day, which is the case for almost anything on earth. This change is taking place in the Arabic language today, and was taking place before and will continue to take place as long as the laws of being [continue to] follow the same way. The acceleration of the refinement of the folk language is the precipitation of what will happen [anyway]. But time does not allow me to [elaborate on] this, so I refer the respected [Qandalaft] to read the books of the modern Western linguists on this subject (katib al-muhdiṣn nin luḡwī al-‘afrafa ḥ-fā’ilka).’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882c: 44 [5])

The Arabic literary heritage

The debaters also have different opinions about the importance of the Arabic literary heritage, and the Arab cultural heritage in general. However, all debaters somehow agree that at least a part of this heritage will be lost if the written language is replaced by the spoken language.

Al-Yāziği is the first to raise the issue of the literary heritage.

‘Concerning the second method, the least that it contains is the destruction of the complete edifice of the Arabic writings (bināyāt taṣāḥīf al-‘arabīyah) and the loss of a lot of the labor of the predecessors (al-muṭaqqāddīmūn) and subsequently the burden of [spending the same labor] in the future.’ (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 404 [2])
The second solution to which Al-Yazıği refers here, is the replacement of the written language with the spoken. Al-Yazıği then means by the destruction of the Arabic writings that these works will no longer be accessible to the reader, since they will speak and write a different language.

Note the use of the word ‘binâyah,’ which can be translated as ‘building’ or ‘structure.’ As such, the Arabic writings are presented as forming a whole, a structure or a building emerging from the complete collection of writings in Arabic during the period preceding the nineteenth century. Moreover, contemporary Arabs will have to spend as much effort as what was spent by the writers preceding them.

*Al-Mumkin* downplays the loss that is implied by Al-Yazıği.

‘Concerning the loss that [results] from abandoning the ancient language (al-luğah al-qadîmah), even if it was magnified by Al-Muqtaṣaf and even more magnified by the respected _ORIGIN_/he exaggerated this magnification out of love for the fatherland and the preservation of the ancient: it is insignificant as compared to the benefits that result from using the folk language (luğat al-‘āmmah). Because it is certainly known that in Arabic there are no books that are used for industry, agriculture, commerce and all the modern sciences, except for what was recently translated into it from Western languages. After twenty years it will be considered outdated and generally it will not be used anymore. The majority [of books] that is still used are some books on the basics of mathematics, some historical books and books on religion, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and language.’ (*Al-Mumkin*, 1882a: 494-495 [3])

It is clear that in general *Al-Mumkin* downplays the importance of the Arabic literary heritage, while acknowledging that it has a certain historical value. He then continues with a detailed discussion of the books he enumerated.

‘The mathematical books do not have any value at this moment, unless for putting them in libraries as vestiges, because the modern mathematical books written by Westerners are immensely much more extensive and simpler. They have to be translated into Arabic (al-luğah al-‘arabîyah) if it is desired that mathematics is studied in Arabic. What is said about mathematical books can be said about history books. If they contain a benefit that is indispensable, they can easily be translated into the folk language (luğat al-‘āmmah).’ (*Al-Mumkin*, 1882a: 495 [3])

What is more interesting for our purposes here, namely concerning identity construction, is *Al-Mumkin*’s view on religion and jurisprudence books.

‘The books on religion (kutub al-dīn) can remain as they are, because the guardians of religion (‘umâda’ al-dīn) have the task to study and to explain them and this is the larger part of their task, if it is not all of it. The Muslims have the example of the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Christians (*al-nâṣarâ min al-lātînîyin wa al-
'arwām), since the Roman Catholics read their Gospels in Latin and the Greek Orthodox in Greek. Or [they can take the example] of the Persian and Turkish Muslims, since they read the Koran in Arabic.' (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 495 [3])

Al-Mumkin is the first in the debate to refer directly to religion, in general, and to Islam, specifically. From this paragraph it appears clearly that according to Al-Mumkin it is no problem if a person has to read his religious books in a language that is different from the language he uses in his daily life. A detailed understanding of these books is delegated to religious specialists which he calls 'umanā’ al-dīn' (custodians of religion).

Al-Mumkin here touches a delicate point, since the dominant Islamic view is that the Koran is an Arabic Koran and that it is as such untranslatable. This point is not contested by Al-Mumkin, since he does not suggest the translation of the religious books into the folk language. However, as we will see below, the fact that the Arab Muslims too will have to read the Koran in a language that is not familiar to them anymore, as a consequence of the general use of the folk language, is not accepted.

This refusal is clearly exemplified in the reaction of the Damascene Literary Society who strongly opposes the idea that Arab Muslims will become like non-Arab Muslims in their reading of the Koran.

'Concerning what he suggested to the Muslims among the Arabs that they will become as the non-Arabs in their reading of the Noble Book, namely a reading that is only devoted to the structures without considering the meanings. This suggestion would only be accepted if they made him their advisor on this [matter]. [Meaning, never.]' (Society, 1882: 555 [10])

Moreover, Al-Mumkin seems to favor a modern secular constitution (niẓām)\(^\text{19}\) that is written in a language that is directly accessible for everybody, as opposed to the law based on God’s revelations (ṣar'ah)\(^\text{20}\) that is written in a language that can only be understood by specialists or highly educated people. This is implied by his statement that the Islamic jurisprudence books (kuttub al-fiqh) can be disposed of.

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\(^{19}\) According to Ayalon ‘niẓām’ (pl. niẓāmāt) was one of the words that were used in order to translate ‘constitution’ during the last third of the nineteenth century. Note that the word ‘niẓām’ has the same root (rq m) as ‘tankāmat,’ the Ottoman reforms to which I referred in Chapter 2. As such, it was not hard to associate both terms with each other (Ayalon, 1987: 94). For an analysis of the evolution of Arabic terminology for the concepts ‘law’ and ‘constitution,’ see (Ayalon, 1987: 81-96).

\(^{20}\) For a discussion of the term ṣar'ah and the verb ṣarra’a, see (Ayalon, 1987: 85-91).
Concerning the books on jurisprudence (*kutub al-fiqh*), they can be abandoned in favor of the [modern secular] law (*niẓām*). There is no objection against writing the law in the folk language (*kitābat al-niẓām bi-luḡat al-ʿāmmah*) so that [both] the elite and the common people can understand it. In my opinion this is an indispensable right, because if otherwise the commoner cannot claim something he does not understand completely. * (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 495 [3])

Finally, Al-Mumkin discusses language books, which are no longer necessary for the general public, even though they will remain available for those who are especially interested in them. Again *al-faṣṭḥah*, here *al-luḡah al-qadīmah* (the ancient language), is compared to Classical Greek and Latin.

The language books (*kutub al-luḡah*) will not be necessary anymore if we start to use the folk language (*al-luḡah al-ʿāmmiyah*), except for the study of the ancient language (*al-luḡah al-qadīmah*), for the one who loves to study it as a specialization, in the same way as the Latin and Classical Greek language books remain preserved and they are studied by the ones who study those two languages. * (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 495 [3])

Al-Mumkin concludes that by using the folk language *al-faṣṭḥah* will not be completely obliterated.

Furthermore, if the folk language starts to be used the ancient language (*al-luḡah al-qadīmah*) will not be obliterated, but rather it will be considered as Classical Greek, Latin and Sanskrit and the people will take pride of their knowledge of it, in the same way as they take pride of their knowledge of these languages. * (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 495 [4])

However, as we will see in the analysis below, Al-Mumkin is the only defender of this opinion.

The Damascene Literary Society reacts very strongly against Al-Mumkin’s statements concerning the literary heritage. First of all the Society stresses the enormous importance of the Arabic linguistic and scientific heritage.

It was the painstaking care of the scholars (*ulamāʾ*) at the Arabic language (*al-luḡah al-ʿarabiyah*) that made them write about its vocabulary (*mufradātuhā*), its syntax (*qulūbuhā*) and specific characteristics (*хаṣāʾīsuhā*) as many books as the stars, so that the mind can almost judge that they did not loose any detail of it. Something similar has never happened for another [language]. They also wrote on the several sciences, industries and arts in Arabic, [so much] that it confuses the mind, despite the fact that a lot of it has gone with the wind and was scattered with the debris of storms. Despite their claim that they arrived at the highest top of the sciences, the Westerners still borrow from [these works], study what remains of
them, spend a lot of money to purchase them and effort to copy them.’ (Society, 1882: 552 [2])

The Society refers explicitly to the importance of the literary heritage.

'Concerning the second method, Al-Ḥalīl referred already to an aspect that makes it inapplicable, because it comprises the loss of the writings of the noble predecessors (al-`aslāf al-kirām), by means of which the intelligentsia ('ulū al-`ifhām) compete, and the burden to write similar [writings] in the future. This contains what it contains, as is generally known. Especially, since the folk languages are clearly very different and their unification into one language is unfeasible.' (Society, 1882: 553 [4])

In this paragraph two arguments against the second solution are cited, namely the danger of the loss of the literary heritage and the impossibility to unify the folk languages into one language.

In the previous chapter, we saw that all the debaters consider the standardization and unification of the folk languages into one and only one standard language as the only alternative for the replacement of the spoken language by the written language. What concerns us here is the reference to the works of 'the noble predecessors' (al-`aslāf al-kirām). Needless to say that the Society added the adjective 'noble' (kārīm pl. kīrām) in order to express its respect for them.

Moreover, this paragraph is immediately preceded by the one in which the Society expresses its preference for the replacement of the spoken language by the written because of

'its distance from the literary and political danger (al-mahdiyār al-`adabi' wa al-mahdiyar al-siyāsi) that is comprised in the second solution. I mean the effacement of the qinsiyah that heralds weakness, humility and inferiority, since the language of a nation is not lost unless it is lost itself and its qin is obliterated. By obliteration we do not mean the physical obliteration but mental obliteration, which is for people with a taste bitterer than the first, provided that [the latter] is the main cause of [the first]. This is what happened to the people of Malta, and everybody knows who they are.' (Society, 1882: 553 [3])

We can read the paragraph as an exemplification of what the Society means by the literary and the political danger. This means that the Arab community must not only preserve the Arabic language in order to have one common language that bonds all contemporary Arabs. This community also needs its language in order to maintain the bond with its past, namely its 'noble predecessors.'
In order to support this the Society wants to prove the importance of the Arabic literary and scientific heritage.

‘Concerning Al-Mumkin’s argument that the benefits that result from using the folk language (lugat al-‘ammah) [for written purpose] outdo the benefits of preserving the original language (al-lugah al-‘asliyah), because of the absence of Arabic books that can be used for industry, agriculture, commerce and modern sciences, except for the books that were translated recently and that the majority of [the books] in the Arabic language that are used are just some books on the basic principles of mathematics, and some history books, and religion, jurisprudence and language books. It comprises false claims.’ (Society, 1882a: 555 [8])

The Society further explains:

‘Concerning his claim [about] the absence of books that are used in industry, agriculture, commerce and the modern sciences, it deviates from what all the communities are in agreement about. Do not let his exaggeration in the description of the sciences as modern (hadīṣah) mislead you. All the sciences that he called modern are tantamount to ancient sciences into which only some additions (ziyādat) and corrections (tanqīḥāt) that were achieved during the successive times and by the accumulation of thoughts, as is the case in all sciences and arts. For instance, physiognomy (jann al-hay‘ah) cannot be said to be a modern science, even though some [new] specifications and realizations were achieved that required the perfection of the instruments and the examination of it from all sides. This is equally so for medicine (al-tibb) and other [sciences]. All the sciences that he called modern are ancient [sciences]. On all the ancient sciences the Arabs have uncountable writings. Indeed, in this epoch some issues of a domain were [further] specified with a special name, devoting special attention to its case, in the same way as the predecessors did with hereditary questions, which was a subdivision of jurisprudence and the treatment of eyes, which was a subdivision of medicine. This is incontestably [a question of] terminology (iṣīlāh). We do not deny that the additions that were added are important additions, which the specialists need to know.’ (Society, 1882a: 555 [9])

Thus, the main argument of the Society is that all the modern sciences are actually based on the ancient scientific heritage and that as such this heritage remains very important. Moreover, in the Society’s opinion, all the traditional sciences (on which the modern sciences are based) belong to the Arab scientific and cultural heritage.

In his second article, Al-Mumkin states that he does not disagree with the Society on the fact that the Arab scientific and cultural heritage is in fact very rich. But, on the other hand, Al-Mumkin stresses that during the nineteenth century scientific developments have been immense and that they outdo the classical scientific output.
‘Seventhly, that in Arabic there are innumerable books on all the sciences and arts, and that all the arts are ancient, and so on. God is great! God is great! Oh sirs, members of the Literary Society, do you not believe that only during the nineteenth century hundreds of sciences appeared for the first time, which have no name, nor sign in Arabic. If not for the lack of space and [fear for] deviation of the subject of the debate (munāẓarah), I would mention to you the names of most of these sciences and their subjects. But, I ask you one question. Does the government of Egypt, host of the lighthouse of the Arabic language, and her proud men and great scholars not know the value of the Arabic scientific, industrial and agricultural books? Why did it then go to trouble for the translation of scientific, industrial and agricultural books from French, while the trouble of translation and revision was tremendous, and their costs immense? Would it then not have been easier and better just to have printed the Arabic books and to have used them in [the governmental] schools?21 Do you not know that most books that the government of Egypt translated and printed since years are very few and that they became outdated now? So, it [the government] translated and composed other [books].’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [7])

H.H. only repeats the arguments of the Society without adding anything new to the debate.

‘The eminent Al-Mumkin said, seventhly, “in Arabic there are innumerable books on all the sciences and arts,”22 and so on.
I say, who reads the books on the scientific subjects written in the Arabic language, notices that their writers divided the sciences in a rational way, moving between negation and confirmation. There is no case that was ancienly or recently discovered which was not entered in the subject of one of the arts that they mentioned in the division [of the sciences]. If not for the lack of space and [fear for] deviating from the subject of the debate, as the respected Al-Mumkin excused himself, I would mention this.’ (H.H., 1882: 693 [9])

H.H. then repeats the Society’s argument and Al-Mumkin’s reaction to it (both quoted above), adding the remark that Al-Mumkin’s reactions is ‘strikingly astonishing,’ after which he continues:

‘I think that this question results from not closely reading the statement of the Society because of a distraction. However, what this statement imparts is that it is

21 Note that Al-Mumkin cites the example of the Egyptian government as one of the main defenders of the Arabic language. This is a clear reference to the important developments that took place in Egypt in the domains of education, translation and the printing press, which I discussed in Chapter 3.

22 Quotation marks mine. Quote from (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [7])
necessary in this epoch not to search the books of the predecessors and their [the Western books'] translations. But the matter is the contrary.' (H.H., 1882: 693 [9])

We can conclude that all the participants, with the exception of Al-Mumkin, value the Arabic literary heritage, and more specifically its role and importance for contemporary society in different ways. All the debaters stress the importance of the corpus of Arabic works written throughout the centuries.

The relation between preserving the Arabic literary heritage and the survival of the community ('ummah) was most explicitly made by the Damascene Literary Society, in the same way as it related the survival of a nation to the preservation of its authentic language (al-luğah al-'asliyah).

After constructing the Arab community as a linguistic community, the way is also paved for defining the Arab community as a community with a history and a literary heritage. Preserving the literary heritage and keeping it directly accessible for contemporary readers is then considered an important aspect of defining the Arab community in history.

Moreover, since this cultural heritage was written down in al-faṣṭah, al-faṣṭah then becomes not only the language that is supposed to construct a bond between all contemporary Arabs, but also the language that constructs a bond between these contemporary Arabs and their past (as preserved in the corpus of Arabic books.)

Al-Mumkin is the only one who chooses squarely for the future by stressing that the Arabic heritage is not that relevant anymore for the development of the modern sciences. However, he does this without disavowing the historical value of the Arabic literary heritage.
RELIGIOUS ARGUMENTATION OR THE LACK THEREOF

As I already mentioned the debaters deploy several kinds of argumentations in order to sustain their positions in the debate. These arguments are not strictly linguistic. What is very remarkable is that religion is hardly ever used as an argument in order to defend one position or the other.

In this section I will discuss the few references to religion that are made in the debate. I will also try to develop an explanation for the conspicuous lack of religious arguments.

As we saw above, Al-Mumkin was the first to bring up the issue of religion. From his way of discussing religion it appears that he wants to refer it to a separate domain of society.

This appears first of all from the fact that the study of religious books should be left to religious specialists. It does not seem important to Al-Mumkin that non-specialist believers are not able to read and understand their religious books directly. Al-Mumkin does not propose the translation of religious books into the folk language. He even cites the examples of the Greek Orthodox and Latin Christians, as well as non-Arab Muslims as examples of members of religious communities who do not use their own languages as liturgical languages, but rather Classical Greek, Latin and ḥṣḥā Arabic, respectively. It is as if by citing these examples he wants to demonstrate that this is not dramatic at all.

The fact that Al-Mumkin does not propose to translate religious books into the folk language does not seem to emanate from some kind of religious conservatism, but rather from the fact that Al-Mumkin does not give religion a central place in society.

This is (indirectly) exemplified by his discussion of the jurisprudence books, which in his opinion can be dismissed, since society is to be regulated by modern secular law (nizām), as opposed to a religiously based law (ṣārṭāḥ). The importance Al-Mumkin attributes to this secular law is illustrated by the fact that he states that this law must be written down in the folk language. As such, this law will be accessible for everybody who might need it to defend himself.

Since Al-Mumkin is a pseudonym we have no clue about his religious background. The contents of his article, as well as Al-Mumkin’s writing style, including lexical preferences, do not help us any further either. The only thing we know is that he claims to have been taught Arabic from the eminent scholars or authorities in the science of language, but this also does not give us a further indication, since some prominent nineteenth-century Christians are known to have studied Arabic from Muslīm šayḥs. Moreover, these eminent scholars, to whom Al-Mumkin refers, were not necessarily Muslims. Therefore, we have no idea whether Al-Mumkin was a Muslim, Christian or Jew, whether he was an Arab or a Westerner.
As we saw, the Damascene Literary Society rejected Al-Mumkin’s suggestion concerning the fact that Arab Muslims will speak a language different from their liturgical language. As the quote above indicates, the Society is convinced that Arab Muslims will never accept this.

Unfortunately I was not able to find any information on the Damascene Literary Society either. Therefore, I do not have any information about the founders of the society and its membership. However, there are some indications suggesting that at least some of its members were Muslim. First of all, cultural life in Damascus seems to have been mainly dominated by Muslims, unlike in Beirut for instance. Moreover, in its article the Society refers to the Koran as ‘al-kitāb al-‘azīz’ (the Noble Book). Even though Christians were often quite or very familiar with Islam and Islamic practice, it still seems unlikely that they would refer to the Koran in these terms and not simply as the (noble) Koran (al-qur’ān (al-karīm)).

Nevertheless, even if we assume that the Society had mainly Muslims as members, its arguments in favor of the use of the written language or al-faṣīḥah is not explicitly religiously inspired or related to Islam. As appears from the analysis presented in this and the previous chapter, the Society’s focus was rather on the Arabic language and the literary heritage written in it as a basis for what it called an Arab ‘community’ (‘ummah). Also the ways in which the term ‘ummah was used suggests a community on a national rather than a religious basis. (See also the discussion of the term ‘ummah in the sub-section ‘Terminology’ above.)

In all the other articles no reference to religion is made at all. This means that we can say that there is yet another unstated consensus among the participants in this debate, namely that religion is not important or at least not very crucial or central to this debate.

Therefore, we can conclude that the linguistic arguments developed in this part of the debate are secular. Al-faṣīḥah is basically seen as a secular bond between all contemporary Arabs as well as between contemporary Arabs and their past, but not as a religious language that constitutes a bond between all Muslims as believers and between the individual believer and God.

This is a very important observation since the primordial importance of Arabic as the liturgical language of Islam is often taken for granted.

On the other hand, it is also striking that the authors do not attempt to explicitly secularize the Arabic language. The (presupposed) bond between al-faṣīḥah and Islam is not discussed and, as such, also not dismantled.

It is of course hard to decide whether the avoidance of religious arguments was a deliberate choice the participants made. However, the least we can say is that in retrospect it was important.

The only participant who somehow moved in a religious direction was Al-Mumkin, who stated that it is not a problem that believers speak a language that differs from their liturgical language. Al-Mumkin also focused on the importance of
the law for everyone. This law to which he referred was a modern secular law (niẓām) as opposed to a revealed law (šarʿah).

**The religious background of the participants**

Part of the explanation for the lack of religious argumentation might be offered by the fact that *Al-Muqtaṣaf* was a periodical that was published by Christians (Ṣarrāf and Nimr), who were moreover known for their secularism.

Also, most of the participants in the debate in *Al-Muqtaṣaf* (Ṣarrāf and Nimr, Al-Yāziği, Dāgīr, Qandalaft) were Christians. The possible exceptions are Al-Mumkin and H.H., who are both anonymous and about whom we have no information at all, and the Damascene Literary Society, about which we have indications that at least a part of its membership might have been Muslims.

However, even in the articles written by these authors, who may have been Muslims, religion in general, and Islam specifically, is not given special attention. As such, we can conclude that the general purport of the argumentation patterns is secular, which was also the general course of *Al-Muqtaṣaf*, which was first of all a scientific journal. This does not mean necessarily that all the participants as individuals were not religious or anti-religious, I only want to indicate that in this debate religion did not have a central place at all.

Some of the debaters, such as Fāris Nimr, Yaʿqūb Ṣarrāf, Hādīl Al-Yāziği and 'Asʿad Dāgīr were or were to become important representatives of some authors called the early manifestations of Arab nationalism. In a more careful way we might say that in their writings and in their political activities they paved the way for the construction of an Arab identity. This Arab identity was basically constructed and represented as a (secular) linguistic and cultural (historical) identity.

Some authors (Holt (1996), Haddad (1970), Philipp(1979)) have suggested and argued that it was not accidental that Christian intellectuals were the first to focus on forms of identity other than denominational ones, in particular secular ones, based for instance on language, culture and/or history.

These intellectuals were Christians living in a political system that had a religious (Islamic) basis, namely the Ottoman Empire. Since the time that Islam had become the dominant religious and political system in the Middle East, Christians as well as Jews had always had the legal status of ‘dimm’ (protected minority). This status guaranteed the freedom of religious practice as well as other rights, but excluded them from real political power and participation on levels higher than the local one.

Nevertheless, as we have seen in Chapter 2, some Jewish and Christian individuals and families succeeded in maintaining and exploiting close relationships with the ruling Ottoman establishment in Istanbul as well as with
local representatives of Ottoman power. Also, when during the eighteenth and
nineteenth centuries some regions developed a local power base, some Christians
and Jews managed to participate in local government. When the mutasarrifiyah
was installed in Lebanon, it was agreed upon that the mutasarrif always had to be a
Christian, though he also had to be non-Lebanese.

However, these were almost always individual cases (with the exception of
the mutasarrif) and often the fact that they were granted some amount of power
was related to their belonging to a religious minority, so that they could not
develop a real power base anyway. Thus, if Christians had political power, their
power was always limited. Even if their position as *gimni* (protected minority)
was not necessarily bad, it contained some serious limitations on the level of, for
instance, full political participation.

These observations can offer an explanation for the stances taken in the debate.
The Christian intellectuals who participated in the debate were not only highly
educated, they also became increasingly aware of European history, and as such
they must have had some awareness of the development of nationalism in Europe
and the ideas of the French Revolution. (See also Chapter 2)

For that reason, it is very plausible that they tried to construct a new Arab
identity that had a secular basis and that, as such, could be shared by Christians of
different denominations as well as Muslims and Jews. If this new Arab identity,
which remained at that moment linguistic and cultural, could take a political form
as well, it would allow all individuals full political participation notwithstanding
religious background.

One could argue that if the debaters wanted to construct an Arab identity
on a linguistic basis, they could also have chosen to unify and standardize the
spoken varieties of Arabic into one new standard language. However, this choice,
defended only by Al-Mumkin, would have contained some serious limitations for
their purposes.

The fact that the majority of the debaters (all with the exception of Al-Mumkin)
defended *al-faṣīḥah* as the common bond rather than *al-ʻammīyah* can be explained
by several factors.

First of all, I think that the strong opposition of the debaters against Al-
Mumkin’s proposal to standardize *al-ʻammīyah* into one common standard
language for all the Arabs was partly caused by genuine linguistic conservatism.
As we have seen in Chapter 4, Al-Mumkin’s opponents were convinced of the
linguistic superiority of *al-faṣīḥah*. They argued that it had a rich lexicon,
morphological devices that easily allow lexical expansion, precise grammatical
rules and internal unity. These characteristics were contrasted with those of *al-
ʻammīyah*, which was seen as too diverse and too divisive, having a poor lexicon
and its use being socially and regionally limited.
However, linguistic conservatism was not the only reason to defend *al-faṣīḥah* so staunchly. As we have seen in this chapter, *Al-Mumkin*'s opponents did not only want to construct an Arab identity, based on language, but they also wanted to give a common history a central place in their construction of Arab identity. This history was mainly accessible via the rich cultural and literary heritage, which was basically written down in *al-faṣīḥah*. If the bond had to be maintained with the Arab history, *al-‘ammīyah* could not play the same crucial role as *al-faṣīḥah*.

Moreover, these Christian intellectuals wanted to construct an identity that could be shared by both Christians and Muslims. They were keenly aware of the central role of *al-faṣīḥah* for Muslims in their religious life as their liturgical language. As such, they probably considered it more appropriate to defend *al-faṣīḥah* as the common standard language, since they knew that otherwise they would not be able to rally enough support from Muslims.

However, at the same time they tried to desacralize *al-faṣīḥah* by focusing on its symbolic value as a cultural and national language and not on its religious value. On the other hand, the religious value of *al-faṣīḥah* was never directly questioned and as such, *al-faṣīḥah* was never explicitly desacralized.

In this way, the debaters promoted *al-faṣīḥah*, a language that had basically been kept intact by Islam, to the linguistic and historical basis for a secular national Arab identity and thus, they paradoxically promoted 'a liturgical language to a state and national language.' (Holt, 1996: 20)

Somehow, they also facilitated the construction of a form of Arab nationalism in which Arabism and Islam are strongly intertwined and which was to become dominant in the Arab world from the 1940s and 1950s on. So, following Holt’s argument, even if the conservative position in the debate was related to quite a revolutionary political project, namely the promotion of a secular identity in a society in which identity primarily had a denominational basis, in the long run the relation with the religious heritage was also kept intact.

'And yet it is far from clear that this language policy has encouraged a modernist outlook. The adoption of European vernaculars in preference to Latin helped the break up of Christendom as an imagined community, although I am sure Luther did not have this in mind, but the spread throughout the Arab world of a standard form structurally identical to classical Arabic reinforced the links between the population and Islam. Instead of the old form of social cohesion or *asabiyya* being replaced by a new identity, the old confessional identity remains very strong, although it has itself undergone a transformation. Much increased literacy levels combined with rapid urbanization mean that scripturalist version of Islam is no longer the preserve of a minority of scholars, the *‘ulamā‘*, but accessible to large sectors of the society. Of course, I am not arguing here that the presence of neofundamentalist movements in most Arab capitals is a necessary and inevitable result of the revitalization of *fusḥā*, a more adequate explanation must first deal with the political and economic
failure of the relevant regimes. But the promotion of a liturgical language to a state and national language is surely a facilitating factor.' (Holt, 1996: 20)

We may wonder then whether this paradox was avoided by Al-Munkin's position, which was more explicitly secularizing and which promoted a completely new standard language based on the spoken languages. Probably this new standard language would also have been more accessible to larger sections of the population.
Chapter 6: The selective use of the literary heritage

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

The value of the Arabic literary heritage is not only discussed explicitly. Its value is also implicitly confirmed by the fact that, despite the differences in opinion, many debaters return to medieval historical and linguistic sources in order to sustain their arguments. From the way they quote these sources it is obvious that they are mainly used in order to invoke authority meant to support a certain argument.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, printing opportunities increased drastically during the nineteenth century. Not only translations and new books were printed, but also medieval manuscripts were edited and printed. This means that works that had until then only existed in a manuscript form and that had only been available on a very limited scale, became more widely available to the general reader.

For instance, *Al-Muqaddimah* (which, as we will see below, *Al-Mumkin* and *H.H.* quote from) was printed for the first time on the Bulāq presses in 1857, preceding the edition of the French Orientalist Quatremère which was published in Paris in 1858. *Al-Muqaddimah* was reprinted in Beirut in 1880 and 1886 (Rosenthal, 1967: cii-ciii).

In this chapter I will briefly analyze how the debaters quote these medieval works. However, I will first indicate some difficulties related to the way in which these sources are referred to.

**The problematic character of the quotes**

One of the elements complicating the analysis of the debaters’ quotes is the fact that they hardly ever refer to the original works and authors in a precise and complete way.

For instance, many quotes do not mention any source or author. Sometimes only the title or only the author of a work is mentioned and in many cases these references are incomplete, as with an abbreviated title or the author’s name. For instance *Al-Yāziği* quotes two lines of poetry introducing them only by saying: ‘How good is what Abū Ṭayyib said’ (*Al-Yāziği*, 1881: 404). The reader then has to know that the *kunyah*¹ *Abū Ṭayyib* refers to the famous Abbaside poet *Al-

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¹ The *kunyah* is a name that consists of ‘*abū*’ (father of) or ‘*umm*’ (mother of) and most often the name of the eldest son. The *kunyah* is still very often used in the Middle East.
Mutannahī (915-965) and that the quoted verses are in fact ascribed to Al-Mutannahī.

For an example of a quote without any reference at all, consider the following paragraph, again written by Al-Yāziḡī.

‘What we mentioned explains their statement that 侵略 (al-balāḡah) is the adaptation of language use (kalām) according to the context (muṭabqat al-kalām li-
muqtaḍā al-hāl).’ (Al-Yāziḡī, 1881: 405 [4])

Again it is up to the reader to know or to find out who is exactly meant by ‘their.’ Based on the content of the quote we might infer that Al-Yāziḡī probably refers to one of the early specialists in rhetoric (balāḡah). However, it is not clear whether Al-Yāziḡī refers to one particular scholar or to a group of scholars. Moreover, it is also possible that Al-Yāziḡī refers to an imaginary, but prototypical rhetorician.

This is what happens in the following paragraph:

‘[W]hen he was asked: “What is eloquence (balāḡah)?” And he said: “It is what the ἀμμαḥ understand and what the ḥāṣṣah approve of.”’ (Al-Yāziḡī, 1881: 405 [4])

Again, it is not clear whom ‘his’ and ‘he’ refer to. Does Al-Yāziḡī refer to a known scholar or to a prototypical scholar? Thus, these ‘quotes’ cannot be considered real quotes in the technical sense. Note also that Al-Yāziḡī as well as many other debaters, does not use quotation marks to mark the end and the beginning of a quote.

Needless to say, the debaters, even those who mention titles or names, or use quotation marks, do not indicate whether they used a manuscript or a printed version. They also do not put down the date of publication of the copy they quote from nor the page number.

Sometimes, we may even suspect that some of the debaters quote from memory without even checking the actual written source. This is the case when we find the same quotes but with slight (though sometimes important!) modifications.

For instance, Al-Mumkin quotes a phrase from the famous historian Ibn Ḥaldūn. He explicitly refers to Ibn Ḥaldūn. But in spite of the fact that Al-Mumkin uses quotation marks in order to separate his own text from the quotes from Ibn Ḥaldūn’s text, he does not mention where exactly he found them. So, he omits the title of the manuscript or printed work. By comparing the quotes with the paragraphs in Al-Muqaddimah, I was able to confirm my intuition that the quotes actually were taken from this work.

2 Quotation marks mine.
Here is the example:

"The natural disposition/linguistic habit of the Muḍarī language (al-lisan al-mudarī) of this epoch has disappeared and has been corrupted. The language of this complete generation (luqat hādā aī-ğay kullihim) is different from the language of Muḍar (luqat muḍar), in which the Koran was revealed." (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8]) [emphasis mine]

This quote is repeated by H.H. in his reaction to Al-Mumkin’s article. However, ‘muḍarī’ is replaced with ‘ḥadārī.’ In Arabic, the difference is only one consonant, but the meaning of the quote then reads as follows:

"The natural disposition of the urban language (malakat al-lisan al-ḥadarī) of this epoch has disappeared and has been corrupted (dahabat wa fasadat). The language of this complete generation is different from the language of Muḍar, in which the Koran was revealed." (H.H., 1882: 692 [7])

I was unable to find this quote in that form in Al-Muqaddimah. So, if it is not a simple printing mistake that is involved, it is possible that H.H. misquotes Ibn Ḥaldūn because he did not check the source.

One of the explanations for the ways in which the debaters dealt with the quotes from medieval sources is what I have called the elitist character of the debate. All the participants were clearly highly educated intellectuals who tried to impress each other with their knowledge of the classical sources. As such, certainly toward the end of the debate, they try to assemble as many quotes and references as possible in a short article. It is at this point that the debate slides down into a pedantic discussion about the reliability of the used sources and the technical aspects of the concept of eloquence (fāṣādah – balāğah).

It is also at this point that Şarruf and Nimir intervene by stating that the discussion has become too technical, that this kind of discussion should be left to real specialists, and that the debate is temporarily closed. (Qandalqaff, 1882b: 110 [9f.])

In general, I tried to retrieve all references to sources and authors, which I mention in footnotes. However, I did not check all the quotes in the (printed versions of) the original works, since this is not really within the scope of this

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3 Double quotation marks original.

4 Quotation marks original.

5 I was not yet able to consult a critical text edition of Al-Muqaddimah, so I do not whether there are variant readings of this paragraph.
research. I also did not try to retrieve the quotes that were mentioned without further reference to the work or its author.

What is most crucial here is how the debaters try to use these quotes and references in order to sustain their points of view. Therefore, I will present a brief analysis of the content of the quotes and their implications for the fushā – ‘āmmīyah debate.
REFERENCES TO HISTORICAL WORKS

First of all, Al-Mumkin quotes the work of Ibn Ḥaldūn in order to sustain his argument that al-faṣḥah is no longer spoken naturally anymore and that this was already the case when Ibn Ḥaldūn was active as a scholar.

‘Your Benevolent Society, the founders of Al-Muqtaṣaf and the great scholar Ibn Ḥaldūn before them believe with their heart that the language that we speak in this epoch is “an independent language, different from the language of Muḍar,” meaning (‘ayy) al-‘arabīyah al-faṣḥah. It has been like this since hundreds of years. Even if [the spoken languages] differed from town to town, they are sufficient “to render the intended meaning and to express what is in the mind, and that is the meaning of ‘al-lisān’ or ‘al-luḡah’ (language). The loss of inflection (‘i‘rāb) in it is not harmful.” And “The natural disposition of the Muḍarī language (al-lisān al-muḍarī) of this epoch has disappeared and became corrupted. The language of this complete generation (lūḡat hāḏī al-ġayl kullihim) is different from the language of Muḍar (lūḡat muḍar) in which the Koran was revealed.” “Since languages were natural dispositions/linguistic habits (malakūt), acquiring them is possible, as is the case [with] other natural dispositions/habits (malakūt). The method of instructing it to the one who desires to acquire this natural disposition/habit (malakūt) is that he starts to memorize their ancient speech of which their styles are in accordance with that of the Koran, the Hadith, the speech of the forefathers and the speeches of the prominent Arabs in their rhyming prose and poetry.” (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8])

By means of these quotes, Al-Mumkin wants to add authority to his positions, since Ibn Ḥaldūn states that ‘āmmīyah can be considered an independent language and that the loss of inflection does not harm the idea that it is a suited medium for communication.

6 Quotation marks original.

7 Quotation marks original.

8 Quotation marks original.
REFERENCES TO LINGUISTIC WORKS: WHAT IS ELOQUENCE?

The concepts of fāsāḥah and balāgah, and the ways in which they relate to each other, are widely discussed in the traditional Arabic linguistic literature and are quite complex. I think it is outside my scope to go into the details of the concepts here.

Here, the debaters most often use the terms balāgah and fāsāḥah interchangeably and often also together with 'al-fāsāḥah wa al-balāgah.' In this context, they can be translated as 'eloquence.' Sometimes, however, the term balāgah is also used in order to refer to the science of rhetoric, usually in the construct 'ilm al-balāgah' (the science of rhetoric).

As will be shown, the participants in this debate focus on the relation between eloquence and comprehensibility. The discussion concerning eloquence was triggered by the observation that the 'āmmah did not understand written scientific texts and the investigation of the reasons why this was so. As pointed out before, the proponents of the replacement of al-luğah al-'āmmīyah with al-luğah al-fāṣīḥah tried to divert the problem of comprehensibility away from inherent characteristics of the language (variety), al-fāṣīḥah, and towards the language users and the ways in which this language variety is used.

Al-Mūmkin, on the other hand, continues to stress that the inherent difference between al-fāṣīḥah and al-'āmmīyah is so large that the only way to solve the problem of comprehensibility is to replace al-fāṣīḥah with al-'āmmīyah.

As we will see in this section, these points influence the ways in which the ancient sources are quoted, (namely which sources and paragraphs of sources are selected) and the ways in which they are interpreted.

Al-Yāziği is the first to claim that the problems the 'āmmah are experiencing in understanding certain types of language use are not so much related to the fact that al-luğah al-fāṣīḥah is so different from the language that the 'āmmah speak, but rather to the ways in which (most of) the hāṣṣah use al-fāṣīḥah. He adds that real eloquence does not depend on the degree of difficulty of the language use, but rather on comprehensibility.

'What we mentioned explains their statement⁹ that eloquence (al-balāgah) is the adaptation of language use according to the context (mutābaqat al-kalām li-muqtadā

⁹ Al-Yāziği does not specify whom he refers to with 'their.' I assume that he refers to earlier (medieval) philologists. It occurs often in this debate that the participants refer to writers and poets and that they quote from earlier (often medieval works) without precisely mentioning the complete name of the author or the title of the work they refer to. This is largely because the authors assume that their readers know these authors and their works. It surely enhances the elitist character of the debate.
al-hāl). By this is meant the situation of the addressed (hāl al-muḥājirāt), depending on his degree of intelligence or stupidity [1] of the addressed, his knowledge or ignorance, and so on. So, everyone should be addressed depending on his situation and for every context [an appropriate] language has to be made (wa yuğ’ al li-kull maqām maqālī). Language use (kalām) that is specifically intended to be addressed to the elite (al-ḥāṣṣah) and which is not suitable for the common people (al-‘āmmah) is very rare anyway. In my opinion, it should be limited to [genres as] maqāmāt and poetry, since they [these genres] cannot do without elegant and amazing [language], and some specific aims of the writer which are not intended for a general [reading] public. In all other cases the common people, rather than the elite, should be taken into consideration (mard‘at al-‘āmmah qabl al-ḥāṣṣah). First of all, one has to turn to the facilitation of meaning, the choice of the clearest words and the simplest structures so that language use has a clear meaning that can be easily understood. Subsequently, one has to turn to the refinement and correction of the expression so that it does not become void of meaning and that it does not obscure the already mentioned clarity, so that the language use is in accordance with the statement of one of them, when he was asked: 'What is eloquence (balāgah)?' And he said: 'It is what the common people understand and what the elite approve of.' (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 405 [4])

Al-Yāziği thus defends the idea that language use has to be adapted to both the context and the addressed, and that in addressing the simple folk a simple language has to be used. This implies that he prefers a rather relative and adaptable notion of eloquence over an absolute one that is related to a fixed set of linguistic items.

However, the relativity and adaptability of eloquence is limited in some important ways. As appears from the last quote, the scope of this adaptability is still determined by the elite, since eloquent language use is that ‘what the ‘āmmah understand and what is acceptable for the ḥāṣṣah.’ Moreover, complex language use is still ‘allowed’ for communication among the elite and for special purposes.

It is also clear that the adaptability of eloquence has to remain within the borders of al-luğah al-faṣiḥah, as appears from the following paragraph.

'It is not necessary to give the reader more information about the wideness of the Arabic language in ways of expression and the multitude of synonyms differing in clarity and obscurity so that the writer finds for one meaning categories of expressions that enable him to render the meaning that he intends to the most eloquent of the elite ('aḥlāq al-ḥāṣṣah) and the most ignorant of the common people ('aḡḥal al-‘āmmah) without losing anything of it.' (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 405 [4])

10 The maqāmāt literature is an Arabic literary genre that is characterized by linguistic artifice, of which rhyming prose is one example. Most famous are ‘Al-Maqāmāt’ by Al-Ḥarīrī (1053–1122).

11 Quotation marks mine.
In this paragraph, *Al-Yāziḡī* clearly means *al-luḡah al-‘arabīyah al-faṣīḥah by al-luḡah al-‘arabīyah*. It appears that not all elements of *al-luḡah al-‘āmmīyah* can be considered to be part of this eloquent language use. This is exemplified by *Al-Yāziḡī*’s definition of ‘eloquent language use’ (*faṣīḥat al-‘ibārah*) as those types of language use that are not folk language in any sense (*‘innahā laysat min luḡat al-‘āmmah fī šayy‘*) (*Al-Yāziḡī*, 1881: 405 [5]).

Only those linguistic items of *al-‘āmmīyah* that have a shared status, namely linguistic items that can be considered both *faṣīḥah* and ‘āmmīyah at the same time, can be considered *faṣīḥah* in *Al-Yāziḡī*’s opinion. *Al-Yāziḡī* also gives some examples of language use which can be considered simple *faṣīḥah* that is near to the *al-‘āmmīyah*, namely the stories of Thousand and one nights and the epic story of ‘Antarah. However, as already said in Chapter 4, not everyone considers these examples of language use as *faṣīḥah*.

*Al-Yāziḡī* also refers to the fact that there are linguistic items that are ‘āmmīyah, but which, with small adaptations, can become *faṣīḥah*. He collected these items in a dictionary.

We can conclude then that eloquence, as seen by *Al-Yāziḡī*, is indeed adaptable, but with limitations, since language use has to remain within the framework of what is considered *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah* (i.e. that which is not *luḡat al-‘āmmah*). Moreover, the elite determine what is *faṣīḥah* and what is not. That is the way in which *Al-Yāziḡī* defends the idea of the simplification of *al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah*.

A similar idea is defended by the Damascus Literary Society.

*Indeed, science and technical books are maybe more incomprehensible for the commoner (‘āmmīyah) because he did not study the [conventional] meaning of some words (wadda ba’d al-kalimāt). However, this does not harm what we said because of our condition that first of all obsolete words must be avoided (*iğtināb al-kalimāt al-wasbīyiyyah*). If they are avoided, then our claim is confirmed. Indeed, there are some of the commoners (*awāmm*) who do not understand many of the familiar words (*kalimāt al-ma’nāsah*). However, this is rare and the rare can be considered nonexistent. Moreover, this is not specific for our commoners. I do not think that anybody would claim that, for instance, all the French commoners (*awāmm al-faransawīyīn*) understand expressions written in French in the same way as their most specialized scholars (*hawāṣṣ ‘ulamā’ithim*) understand them and that they understand the poems of their poets in the same way as their poets do. What indicates that *Al-Munkin* did not reflect on the article of *Al-Ḥalīl* and his remarks concerning the conditions he made, is his demand to one of the commoners (*‘ānnā min al-awāmm*) to understand pre-Islamic poems, which contain many obsolete words (*kalimāt al-wasbīyiyyah*), because the research is [focused on] familiar and current language use (*ma’nās al-luḡah wa musta’maluhah*). Even many of our
distinguished contemporary writers have difficulties to understand them. This does not necessarily mean that they do not know the Arabic language. There is no need to use these words which are incompatible with faṣīḥah for us because of their strangeness (li-ğarābatihā), even if they were faṣīḥah for the people of that epoch.' (Society, 1882a: 554 [5])

From this quote we can conclude that in the Society’s opinion eloquence can be achieved by avoiding obsolete words (al-kalimāt al-wahšīyah).

What is even more interesting is that the Society claims that language use that was considered eloquent (faṣīḥah) in a certain period and then became obsolete cannot be considered eloquent anymore since it is no longer widely understood by contemporary speakers.

The Society sustains this claim by referring to an anecdote about the well-known Abbaside poet Al-Ṣaft Al-Hilī (1278-1348). Somebody had sent Al-Hilī a collection of poems and Al-Hilī is supposed to have said about it that there was nothing wrong with it, but that it did not contain any Arabic words (ḥālin min al-‘alfāz al-‘arabīyah).

In order to illustrate his point Al-Hilī wrote a poem which he interspersed with strange and obsolete Arabic words and expression and which he contrasted with their current and familiar equivalents. The Society quotes this poem:

Al-hayzabūn and al-dardabis and al-ṣaḥā, al-nuqāqā and al-‘alṭābis
Al-ghatāris, al-ṣaḥaṭaḥab, al-ṣaq‘ab, al-harbabṣīs and al-‘aytamūs
Al-ḥarāğūg, al-‘afanqas, al-‘afīaq, al-tirfisān and al-‘aṣīs

A language for which the ears have a distaste
when it is pronounced, while the souls are nauseated
It is repugnant that the one with distaste inserts the obsolete from it
and abandons the familiar
The best words are those that move the hearer
and by which the companion is healed
Where is my saying, this is an ancient sandhill
in comparison to my saying ‘aqanfal qadmūs
We will not find a singer chanting
qaftanabakī on the lute when the drinking glasses pass
Do you think, if I said to my beloved yá ‘iql, that she would know that it means my dearest darling

12 This probably refers to obsolete words (al-kalimāt al-wahšīyah), but it can also refer to pre-Islamic poetry (al-qasī‘id al-ḡahītyah).

13 For more details about Al-Hilī’s life and work see Heinrichs (1995a: 801-805).
Do you think, if I said ḥabb al-‘īr
that I meant the camels passed
These languages are studied
the people are led by what their leader says
These hearts are of iron
and beautiful words are magnets\(^\text{14}\)
(Society, 1882a: 554-555 [6])

The Society’s interpretation is that Al-Ḥillī wanted to illustrate that the use of strange and obsolete (pre-Islamic) words is not eloquent, since nobody is able to understand them and that the use of simple words, which everybody understands is much more eloquent and beautiful.

The Society also sustains this argument by referring to what was mentioned in a previous issue of Al-Muqtāṭaf:

‘The confirmation that the use of obsolete words (al-kalimāt al-wahšiyah) is incompatible with faṣāḥah was mentioned in one of the issues of Al-Muqtāṭaf, quoting one of the authorities of rhetoric, namely the commentator on (Ṣāriḥ) Al-ṁiṣḥāḥ\(^\text{15}\) and supported with quotes from the Noble Book (al-kitāb al-‘aẓīm).’
(Society, 1882a: 555 [7])

However, Al-Mumkin disagrees and reacts as follows:

‘Fifthly, the definition of faṣāḥah by quoting a poem of Al-Ṣafī Al-Ḥillī and what Al-Muqtāṭaf quoted from the commentary on (Ṣāriḥ) Al-ṁiṣḥāḥ.\(^\text{16}\) Among what was said with respect to this [is] that strange words (al-kalimāt al-garībāh) are incompatible with faṣāḥah for us even if they were faṣāḥah for the people of that time (the time of the gāhibiyah).\(^\text{17}\) If this statement is confirmed, and I do not think that any of the rhetoricians would advocate it in support of us, than the words that

\(^{14}\) Since Al-Ḥillī tries to make the point that the extensive use of old (pre-Islamic) Arabic words makes a poem incomprehensible, I deliberately chose not to translate these words in the poem itself.

\(^{15}\) This is a reference to a commentary on ‘Miṣḥāḥ al-‘alām’ written by Al-Sakākīnī, (Bonebakker, 1978: 863-864), which might be ‘Kitāb al-ṁiṣḥāḥ fi al-ma‘āni wa al-bayān’, known as ‘Al-ṁiṣḥāḥ,’ written by Badr Al-Dīn Ibn Mālik (d. 586/1287). (Heinrichs, 1995b: 894) Note that in his second article, Al-Mumkin refers to the commentator on (Ṣāriḥ) Al-ṁiṣḥāḥ.

\(^{16}\) Note that Al-Mumkin refers here to the commentary on (Ṣāriḥ) Al-ṁiṣḥāḥ. Since he obviously refers to the same work as the Society, who referred to it as the commentary on (Ṣāriḥ) Al-ṁiṣḥāḥ, and since Al-ṁiṣḥāḥ itself is a commentary on Al-ṁiṣḥāḥ, we can assume that he refers to Al-ṁiṣḥāḥ.

\(^{17}\) Brackets original. Al-gāhibiyah, which means literally ‘the time of ignorance,’ is the most current term in Arabic to refer to the period before Islam.
are not strange (al-kalimāt gaṣyr al-garībah) are the faṣīḥah [words]. And that is sufficient for us." (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [5])

What Al-Mumkin tries to explain here is that both Al-Yāzīǧī and the Society try to read a relative notion of eloquence into the sources they quote. He is convinced that the rhetoricians would never accept that words that were eloquent at a certain time can become not eloquent at another.

Al-Mumkin also interprets Al-Ḥillī’s poem differently:

'Let the righteous person examine the poetry of Al-Ḥillī, for I see it reveal the necessity to use the language that was current in his epoch (al-i’timād ‘alā al-ḥaṣa al-ṣā’i’ah fi ‘aṣrīḥi). Would you say that indeed he would maintain his belief if he were [to live] in our epoch?' (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [5])

Al-Mumkin states that Al-Ḥillī’s ironic poem reveals that Al-Ḥillī in fact supported the idea of using the current language of his epoch (al-ḥaṣa al-ṣā’i’ah fi ‘aṣrīḥi). It is not very clear what Al-Mumkin means by this. Does he mean the current spoken language? Does he mean the written language that was current at that time?

However, it is also possible that Al-Mumkin refers to Al-Ḥillī’s poetry in the folk language, which was not published in his diwān, but in another work, namely, Al-kitāb al-‘aṭīl wa al-muraḥḥas al-gālt. This work was completely devoted to Arabic poetry in the folk language and according to Heinrichs (1995a) it can be considered ‘the first poetics of Arabic dialect poetry’ (Heinrichs, 1995a: 803-804). It also contains a considerable amount of Al-Ḥillī’s own poetry in the folk language. Al-Ḥillī consciously collected his poetry written in faṣīḥah, and his poetry in the folk language, to which Al-Ḥillī himself refers as ‘ṣīr mu’raḥāb’ (inflected poetry) and ‘ṣīr maḥān’ (colloquial poetry) respectively, in two different volumes. Heinrichs concludes that as such Al-‘aṭīl can be considered an extension of Al-Ḥillī’s diwān (Heinrichs, 1995a: 804).

It is also not very clear what Al-Mumkin exactly means with his question whether Al-Ḥillī would still defend the use of the current language if he were to live in the 19th century. Maybe he notices that there is a contradiction between Al-Ḥillī’s suggestion that it is necessary to use the current language (which different from al-faṣīḥah as suggested by the quotes from Ibn Ḥaldaṇ’s work) and the fact that the actual language of his poem and his diwān is al-faṣīḥah. Or maybe, Al-Mumkin wants to suggest that even if Al-Ḥillī also wrote poetry in the folk language and even devoted a complete work to it, it would not make him defend

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18 This depends of course on whether or not Al-Mumkin knew the work.
the use of the folk language in all domains of society. In both cases, I think that Al-Mumkin tries to suggest that Al-Hilli did not defend a relative notion of eloquence at all, because if he did, he would defend the use of al-‘āmmīyah were he to live in the 19th century (since, according to Al-Mumkin, al-‘āmmīyah is the current language of that epoch).

Al-Mumkin then concludes from this that Al-Hilli, as well as the scholars of rhetoric, would not defend the position that is defended by Al-Yaḥṣūbī and the Society, namely that strange or obsolete words cannot be considered faṣīḥah anymore even if they were at a certain time. In other words, Al-Mumkin states that people such as Al-Hilli did not believe in a relative notion of faṣīḥah but rather in an absolute one (namely, adhering to a fixed set of linguistic elements).

We have to keep in mind that Al-Mumkin defends the idea that the distance between the written and the contemporary spoken language has become so wide that the only solution is to choose radically for a new written language, which has to be based on the spoken language. It is somehow in his interest to present al-faṣīḥah and the related concept of eloquence (faṣīḥah) as absolute and rigid.

I think that H.H. misses Al-Mumkin’s (ironical) point, since H.H. interprets Al-Mumkin’s statement as if he is convinced that Al-Hilli defended the use of the al-‘āmmīyah. However, as indicated above, I do not think that that is what Al-Mumkin meant.

‘Concerning his claim that the statement of Al-Ṣafī reveals ‘the necessity to use the language that was current in his epoch (al-‘iṭimād ‘alā al-luqāh al-ṣā‘i’a fi ‘aṣrihi).’ It is groundless because Al-Ṣafī Al-Hilli was a contemporary to the great scholar Ibn Ḥaldūn. Ibn Ḥaldūn stated that ‘The natural disposition/linguistic habit of the urban language (malākat al-līsān al-ḥadārī) of this epoch has disappeared and has been corrupted (dahaba wa fasaḍaḍ). The language of this complete generation is different from the language of Mūdār, in which the Koran was revealed.’ Al-Ṣafī Al-Hilli only wrote in the language of Mūdār as his writings testify. If his opinion was that of the eminent Al-Mumkin then he would have written in the language that was current in his epoch (al-luqāh al-ṣā‘i’a fi ‘aṣrihi). We took the inconsistency in this statement as an indication of his skillfulness in Arabic, as is

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19 This might be suggested by the fact that Al-Hilli in fact did not include his malāḥān poetry in his dawān, which indicates that he considered it somehow form a different order. Nevertheless, he considered this kind of poetry important enough to devote a complete work to it.

20 Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 613 [5]).

21 Note that H.H. refers again to ‘al-līsān al-ḥadārī’ instead of ‘al-līsān al-muḍārī.’
plain for somebody who studied Arabic from its most insignificant masters\(^{22}\).
\((H.H., 1881: 692 [7])\)

Either \(H.H.\) does not know that \(Al-Hillî\) actually did write some of his poetry in the folk language and even published it in a work that was completely devoted to this kind of poetry, or he purposefully neglects it.

At this point the discussion concerning eloquence becomes polemical. In the remainder of the debate, the debaters mainly add new quotes on \(faṣāḥah\). They also discuss how these quotes should be interpreted, the value of some of them is polemically questioned.

It is clear that the discussion is not only focused on content. The debaters not only try to impress each other with their knowledge of the linguistic sources and their erudition, they also try to denigrate each other by criticizing the quotes and their interpretation. This is often achieved by inserting little sharp remarks about the opponent.

In the remainder of the article, \(H.H.\) reacts to \(Al-Mumkin\)'s article. First of all he suggests that if \(Al-Mumkin\) had a good understanding of the concept of eloquence (\(faṣāḥah\)), he would not have used the argument that a folk person is not able to understand pre-Islamic poetry.

"The eminent \(Al-Mumkin\) said, fourthly "that I did not reflect on the article of \(Al-Hallî\),"\(^{23}\) and so on.

I say, what \(Al-Mumkin\) did not reflect on is the statement of \(Al-Hallî\) in which he believed "that the barrier between language and [the understanding of] meaning is not on the part of the language, but rather on the part of the language users,"\(^{24}\) until he states "and they asked one of them "What is eloquence (\(balāgah\))? And he said: "It is what the common people (\(āmmāt\)) understand and what the elite (\(ḥaassi\)) approve of."\(^{25}\) This statement refers to the necessity of avoiding words that are strange for the commoners (\(al-\,awāmm\)) in books that have the aim to benefit them as well. If he had reflected on this, he would not have asked one of the commoners (\(al-\,awāmm\)) to understand pre-Islamic poems, which contain words that are strange for many of the \(ḥawâṣṣ\) of this epoch, in addition to the commoners (\(al-\,awâmm\)). It

\(^{22}\) This is a polemical reference to \(Al-Mumkin\)'s claim that he studied Arabic from the greatest masters of Arabic.

\(^{23}\) Quotation marks mine.

\(^{24}\) Quotation marks mine.

\(^{25}\) Quotation marks mine.
is obvious that not reflecting on this results from distraction. God forbid that the Literary Society attributes weak understanding to an eminent person who studied Arabic from the most famous authorities on language and who acquired the ancient and the modern sciences. Concerning the fact that he only asked one of those who did not study the language well to understand a pre-Islamic poem and to explain the meaning of every word and expression in it. This is indisputable, except that this does not benefit him at all, since language is one of the transmitted sciences, of which the issues can only be studied from a book or a teacher, since the mind has no opportunity to know them by its own. It is generally known that somebody who did not study the language well, is an 'ommī in relation to what he did not study. As such, the statement of the Society is irreproachable. (H.H., 1882: 692 [5])

He then turns to the question of what real eloquence (faṣāḥah) is.

'The eminent Al-Munkin said, fifthly: "the definition of faṣāḥah by quoting a poem of Al-Ṣaḥḥ Al-Hili and what Al-Muqtaṣaf quoted," and so on. I say, he [Al-Qazwini] said in Talḥīṣ al-miftāḥ27 and this is the most famous work on rhetoric. "Faṣāḥah describes a single word, speech and the speaker. Balāgah describes only the latter two [namely speech and the speaker]. Faṣāḥah of the single word means that it is free from discord of letters, oddness and deviation from analogy. Discord is like 'gadā' irīḥa mustanḏirā 'ilā 'ala'28 (his braids are twisted upwards). Oddness is like fāhiman mursanan musrīqan,29 meaning as the sword qua preciseness and straightness and as a lamp in the lightening. And deviation is like 'al-hamdū l-lāh al-'alī al-agīlāl.' It is said that it is hateful for the hearing such as 'karīm al-ḡirīfīyah' but there is discussion about this. [Faṣāḥah] of speech means that it is free of weak composition, discord between words and complexity, despite of its faṣāḥah (ma'a faṣāḥah-tuhā)."31 (H.H., 1882: 692 [6])

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26 Quotation marks mine.

27 'Talḥīṣ al-miftāḥ' was written by Ġadāl al-dīn al-Qazwīn, the Ḥaṣīf of Damascus (666-739/1267-1338). It was a commentary on 'Miftāḥ al-'ulām' written by Al-Sakkākī. (Bomebakker, 1978: 863-864) Another famous work of Al-Qazwīn is 'Ṭālīf fī 'ulām al-balāgah,' which is an expanded version of the former. (Heinrichs, 1995b: 894) For a summary of Al-Qazwīnī’s concept of faṣāḥah and balāgah, see also Von Grunebaum’s article ‘Faṣāḥah’ in the Encyclopaedia of Islam. (Leclef, 1965: 824-827). This means that by ‘he’ Al-Qazwīnī is meant.

28 Quotation marks mine.

29 Brackets mine.

30 Quotation marks mine.

31 Double quotation marks original.
On the basis of this quote H.H concludes that there is a relative and adaptable notion of fasāḥah.

'This statement is unambiguous: the scholars of rhetoric say that using strange Arabic words (al-kalimāt al-‘arabiyyah al-‘aribah) is incompatible with fasāḥah, because the hearer does not benefit from it. Since strangeness (al-‘aribah) is relative (nisbf) because something can be strange for a group of people or for a person, while it is not for another group of people or person. Thus, if strange Arabic words are used to address someone who does not understand them, then they are not eloquent (lam takun fasāḥah). If they are used to address someone who understands them, then they are eloquent (kānat fasāḥah). This invalidates his [Al-Mumkin’s] statement: ‘and I do not think that one of the scholars of rhetoric would advocate it.’32 This statement is also unambiguous: the folk language (luğat al-‘āmmah) is not eloquent (fasāḥah) for the scholars of rhetoric because of its enormous deviation from analogy (qiyās) [with al-fasāḥah]. If he doubtes anything of this he has to check this book and the commentaries [on it].’ (H.H., 1882: 692 [61])

H.H. argues in favor of a notion of eloquence that has a relative component in a more explicit way than Al-Yazıği and the Society did, by stating that whether an utterance is considered ‘odd’ or ‘obsolete’ is something relative (nisbf). A strange or obsolete utterance can only be considered eloquent if it is understood by the addressed.

However, he also repeats the argument that the relativity of eloquence cannot be stretched in such a way that al-‘āmmiyah can be considered to be eloquent as well, since it deviates too much from analogy (qiyās).

What is important for our purposes in this chapter is that H.H sustains his point by quoting Al-Qazwīni’s work, namely Taḥs al-miṭāh.

Also Qandalf reacts to Al-Mumkin’s reaction against the idea that eloquence (fasāḥah) contains a relative component. He underscores his point quoting yet another source, namely ‘Al-maṭal as-sā’ir’ written by Ibn Al-‘Aqr.

Concerning the denial by the respected Al-Mumkin of the Literary Society and the commentator on (Ṣūrūt) Al-miṭāb in their definition of fasāḥah and balāghah and his suspicion to consent with the scholars of rhetoric (namely) that strange words are incompatible to fasāḥah for us, even if they were fasāḥah for the people of that epoch.33 We answer him. (1)34 The definition which was communicated by Al-
Muqtatuf is unanimously agreed upon by those rhetoric scholars we know, such as (Šārīḥ) Al-miṣbāḥ, which is the most famous, and Ibn Al-ʿAṯr, the authority in the discipline of the art of composition. (2) The statement on those strange words was confirmed, elucidating this, by the very erudite authority in ‘Al-ḥaṭāf al-sāʿir’ and here is some support for both issues. He said in the chapter of the definition of faṣāḥah and balāghah what he stipulated: “Eloquent speech is what is clear and obvious, and this is when the words are [directly] understood and the understanding does not need to be derived from language books. They [the words] only have this characteristic because they are familiar in usage among the lords of poetry and prose, current in their speech, and they are only familiar in usage (maʿlāfat al-ʿistiʿal bayn ʿarbāb al-nazm wa al-nāṣr dāʿiʿar al-kalāmiḥim) current in speech excluding the other words because of the position/importance of their superiority. This is because the lords of poetry and prose sieved the language by considering its words. They probed, divided and chose beauty among the words and they used them, and they refused ugliness and they did not use them.” On obsolete language use and strange words he said the following: “Words can be divided into three classes, of which two are beautiful and one is ugly. Of the two beautiful classes, one, its first and later usage is current from the ancient time until our epoch, and it is not called obsolete (waḥaṣṭy). The other, its first usage is current but not its other and its usage differs from epoch and its people, and that is what is not bad to use for the Arabs because for them it was not obsolete, but for us it is obsolete.”

Qandalaft uses this quote in order to defend the Al-Yāziği’s and the Society’s claim that there is a relative notion of eloquence. He adds polemically that Al-Mumkin should know this since he allegedly studied with ‘with the greatest authorities on the Arabic language.’

“This writing is completely unambiguous. It dismisses the doubt/suspicion of our opponent and it supports what the Literary Society mentioned and what the respected Al-Muqṭatuf quoted. Nevertheless, our opponent cannot be blamed for his doubt about the definition of faṣāḥah and balāghah and what we said about strange

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35 Quotation marks mine instead of original brackets.

36 Dīyāʿ al-dīn Naṣr Allāh Ibn Al-ʿAṯr (1162-1239). His most important work was ‘Al-ḥaṭāf as-sāʿir fi ṣadab al-kāthib wa al-sāʿir.’ (Al-Munṣid, 4) Rosenthal mentions that 1163 was the year in which Ibn Al-ʿAṯr was born (Rosenthal, 1971: 724-725).

37 Quotation marks mine. For Al-ḥaṭāf as-sāʿir, see previous footnote.

38 Quotation marks original.

39 Quotation marks original.
words because it appears that this primary question in rhetoric was not presented to him during his study with the greatest authorities on the Arabic language.' (Qandalafti, 1882a: 695-696 [5])

Al-Mumkin is not so easily convinced. However, he does not refute Qandalafti’s point by providing a different interpretation of the quote, but by dismissing the quote altogether. He does not do this on the basis of its content, but by questioning the competence of Ibn Al-'Ațir.

'Firstly, I did not see anyone who considered Ibn Al-'Ațir, the writer of 'Al-maṣaṣṣ al-aṣ-ṣā'ir,'40 to belong to the scholars of rhetoric. The one who denies this has to refer to his biography. So quoting him here is misplaced.' (Al-Mumkin, 1882c: 43 [2])

Thus, Al-Mumkin suggests that the quote from Ibn Al-'Ațir has no value in the debate since he is no authority in rhetoric. He does not bother to discuss the content of the quote itself.

He then continues:

'Secondly, I do not deny the definition of faṣāḥah which was quoted by Al-Muqtataf from Al-Ṣirāzī, because the phrase of Al-Ṣirāzī quoted by Al-Muqtataf is the following: "I saw a group of claimants of this art who considered eloquent speech (al-kalâm al-faṣāḥ) that what is hard to understand and difficult to comprehend. As such, they considered obsolete speech (al-kalâm al-waḥṣī) and obscure words (gāmiʿ al-alfāẓ) and they described it as eloquence (faṣāḥah) while it is the opposite of it. Because eloquence is clarity and plainness (al-zuhūr wa al-bayān), not obscurity and secrecy. (al-gumūd wa al-ḥafāʾ)'41 What I had doubts about is [the following]. "Strange words are incompatible to eloquence for us, even if they were eloquent for the people of that period."42 In other words, strange words are eloquent in a certain period and not eloquent in another, relative to the difference of time and persons.' (Al-Mumkin, 1882c: 43 [2])

Al-Mumkin further elaborates on this, again by adding new quotes.

'Thirdly, all the scholars of rhetoric, whose books I have read, do not say "that strange words are incompatible to faṣāḥah to us, even if they were faṣāḥah for the

40 Quotation marks mine.
41 Double quotation marks original.
42 Double quotation marks original.
people of that period." They rather say the opposite, as you will see. Al-Sakkākī, the writer of Al-miftāh said: "Faṣāḥah consists of two parts. [One] resorting to meaning (al-ma'na), namely that speech is free from complexity and [one] resorting to [the form of] the word (lafz), namely that the word is authentic Arabic (‘arabiyyah ‘aṣīyah). The indication hereof is that it is more frequent on the tongues of the eloquent [persons] among the Arabs, who are trustworthy [concerning their] Arabic, and that they use it more often (‘an takūn ‘alā ‘alsunat al-‘fuṣūlāhā min al-‘arab al-mawqūṭin bi-‘arabiyyathum ‘adwar wa ‘isti’ma’lūhum la-hā ‘akṣar)." This means that each word that meets these two conditions is eloquent (faṣīḥah) in all places and periods. A word then [cannot be] eloquent for the people of that epoch and not eloquent for us. Al-‘Asfrā’īnī said in Sarh at-talhīs about the explanation of strangeness (al-‘arabah) that "what is meant by strangeness that abundon eloquence is the (word) that is strange in the eyes of all the eloquents (al-fuṣūlāh) kulluhum)...and since strangeness is more general than that what abundon eloquence is proven by the strange words in the Korān and the Hadith." As such, the word that was eloquent for the Arabs (faṣīḥah ‘inda al-‘arab), is still eloquent for us (faṣīḥah ‘inda ‘inda), even if we consider it strange (wa law ‘itsaqrāyhā), because "strangeness is more general than that what abundon eloquence." In Talhīs al-talhīs of Al-Mahāsīnī he said:

The eloquence of the single word is that it is free from strangeness and from contradiction from the adequate.'

(Al-Munkin, 1882c: 43 [3])

And:

43 Quotation marks original.

44 Al-Sakkākī (1160-1229) was an important rhetorician. His most important work was 'Miftāh al-ulūm' in which he tries to cover all linguistic disciplines. The three major parts of the work cover morphology ('ilm al-šarḥ), syntax ('ilm al-nahw) and style/rhetoric (bayān), hence Ibn Ḥoldīn's reference to it as 'Al-miftāh fi al-nahw wa al-taṣrif wa al-bayān' (Rosenthal, 1967: 336). See also (Versteegh, 1997: 123-126).

45 Double quotation marks original.

46 Unfortunately I did not find information about this reference.

47 Round brackets original.

48 Double quotation marks original.

49 Double quotation marks original.
He said in his commentary: “Strangeness means that a word is obsolete (al-kalimah waḥṣiyah) and that its meaning is not manifest (gāyr zāhirat al-ma’na), that its usage is not familiar (wa lā ma’naṣat al-‘isti’māl), rejected by the generally accepted usage (yanuquddūhā as-sanā‘), avoided by the natural disposition (yanfūr minhā at-tībā‘).” It is obvious that the word that combines all these characteristics in itself is all times not eloquent. As such, it is impossible that there exists now a strange word that abandons eloquence if it was at some time eloquent. He said in ʿTurq as-sāriḥat bi-al-gawādī’ on the explanation of strangeness: “strangeness is that its usage is not familiar for the pure (al-ḥullas)” and (they are the pure/eloquent Arabs (wa hum al-‘arab al-faṣāḥ)) Then he said, “Know that what is not familiar in usage among them (gāyr ma’nūṣ al-‘isti’māl baynāhum) has not a clear meaning for them (gāyr zāhir al-ma’na ‘inda hum) and therefore you see that the people explain it, sometimes because the word has not a clear meaning, sometimes because it is not familiar in usage, and sometimes because of both of them.” As such, the words that were eloquent (faṣāḥah) for them cannot be described by strangeness that abandons eloquence (al-gharābah al-muṭḥillah bi-al-faṣāḥah) and they do not deviate from eloquence [just] because they became strange for us.’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882c: 43-44 [4])

It is clear that Al-Mumkin tries to impress the readers, and especially Qandalaft (who indirectly questioned his competence), by abundantly quoting classical sources, namely ʿAl-miṣṭāḥ’ written by Al-Sakkākī, ʿṢarḥ at-talḥīs’ by Al-Asfārīnī and ʿTalḥīs al-talḥīs’ by Al-Maḥāsinī and ʿTurq as-sāriḥat bi-al-gawādī’ of which he does not mention the author.

Qandalaft again replies to Al-Mumkin:

‘(Thirdly), the question of faṣāḥah in reality. The writer of the reaction [Al-Mumkin] made [the reader] believe, when he mentioned the statements of the rhetoricians, that we contradict them in their statement “some of the old eloquent [words] (ba’d al-faṣāḥ al-godim) are wrong for us to use in our time, so that they are even not considered faṣāḥ anymore.” No wonder that he was

50 Double quotation marks original.
51 Double quotation marks original.
52 Brackets original. Al-Mumkin mentions faṣāḥ in it singular form.
53 Double quotation marks original.
54 Brackets original.
55 Quotation marks original. Qandalaft opens the brackets, but does not close them.
carried away by his imagination\(^5\) in this research. Despite that he is apparently precise, he is a slippery spot for the delusions of many. So, if he is not given the necessary investigation, the leader will be unknown and the one who is guided [by him] will go astray because of him. The origin of this is that obsolete and strange words (اللغة al-wahšī wa al-ğarib) and [words that have] the same meaning occur frequently in the books of the rhetoric, [fluctuating] between the general and specific (الغامرة al-'umām wa al-ğusūr), the limited and the broad (الخليفة al-ta'ayyud wa al-ğilāq). Nevertheless, the important for us of this in this context is the confirmation of our previously mentioned claim. And that is proof.' (Qandalaft, 1882b: 110 [7])

Also Qandalaft finds it necessary to add new quotes:

'In the Mutawwil of Al-Ġazālī, which is a current [work] among the students of rhetoric is mentioned the following: “the [category of] obsolete [words] (اللغة al-wahšī) consists of two classes. One [consists of] beautiful strange [words] (غريب hadram) and the other [consists of] ugly strange [words] (غريب qabīl). The use of beautiful strange [words] is not wrong for the Arabs, because it was not obsolete for them (لا يمكن wahšīyan ‘indahum) (meaning, that it is obsolete for us).\(^5\) Such as, ُسَحَر نباج, ُسِحَارا, and ُسِحَارا, and these [words] are in poetry more acceptable than in prose. There are [also] the strange [words] in the Koran and Hadith. The ugly strange is completely unacceptable to use, and is also called the ملك obsolete (اللغة al-ğalāz).\(^5\) Is the meaning of this statement then not precisely what we meant and does it not have the same content as what we quoted from Ibn Āfīr? And if not, is it than permissible for our scholars to use every strange word that appeared in the Koran and the Hadith, despite of the fact that it deviates from the general rules? Such as, ‘لا يَسَعُون la-sa’īrān’ which appeared in the Koran and [word] ‘وَلَا يَسَعُون min am-barr am-siyām ft am-safar’ which appears in the Hadith in stead of ‘البار, al-ṣiyām and al-safar’.\(^5\) In the same way as they permitted it in their time because it was the variant (تَغَامِر) of some Arabs. What results from all this is that some of the strange ُفَسِيد in ancient times is forbidden and unacceptable to use now and as such, not ُفَسِيد. If he stubbornly insists that it is forbidden to name [an utterance] not ُفَسِيد because its use is unacceptable, we leave the decision to the researchers with good taste.' (Qandalaft, 1882b. 110 [8])

At this point ُسَحَر and ُنَمَر wisely decide to consider the debate temporarily closed.

\(^5\) Literally: No wonder that the riding animal of delusive imagination roamed with him.

\(^5\) Round brackets original. This must be a remark inserted by Qandalaft.

\(^5\) Double quotation marks original.

\(^5\) Quotation marks mine instead of original brackets.
It appears to us that the most important of what the debaters are attached to concerning al-lughah al-fasihah and al-'ammiyah is their research on the question whether the beautiful [but] strange [word] (al-garib al-hasan), which was acceptable to use for the Arabs because it was not obsolete (wahsh) for them, is obsolete for us and, as such, is unacceptable to use for us. In our opinion, after investigating the proof of the debaters, they hale one another for the judge, namely the great Arab scholars. Maybe they can forward an explicit and clear text that does not need further explanation in order to answer their question, either by confirming or denying [that it is] acceptable to use the beautiful [but] strange [word] (al-garib al-hasan). If they came with an unmistakable judgement they would offer the students of Arabic an undeniable service. And if not, then this is the end of this debate in this section, without rebuke or blame. (Ṣarrīf & Nimr, 1882: 110 [9])
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DISCUSSION ABOUT FAṢĀḤAH FOR IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION: MALAKAH—FAṢĀḤAH—‘URŪBAH

As clearly appears from the above, the debaters increasingly focus on the meaning of eloquence (faṣāḥah — balāghah) in the course of the debate. Even though I have indicated that one of the reasons for the participants to quote classical-medieval sources to demonstrate their knowledge of these sources, there are deeper reasons for focussing on the notion of eloquence.

In this section I will present some preliminary remarks on how the idea of faṣāḥah can provide us with further insight into one of the linguistic basis that is given to Arab nationalism. I will do this by indicating how the notions of malakah (natural disposition — linguistic habit), faṣāḥah (eloquence) and ‘urūbah (Arabness/Arabism) can be related to each other. However, I want to stress that these are only preliminary remarks and that further research is needed.

The following quote is taken from an article that appeared in Al-Muqtatāf a few years after the sub-debate:

‘We are the sons of the Arabic language and it is our obligation to master our language (fa-nahmu ‘abnā’ al-luğah al-‘arabīyah min wāṣibinā ‘itqān luğatinā) so that we can understand the books of our forefathers and can explain to others what is concealed in our minds in an eloquent Arabic language that does not fall to the lowest level of bad expression and idiom (bi-luğah ‘arabīyah faṣīḥah gayr sāqīāh ‘ilā al-darāk fi as-sī’ al-ta’bīr wa al-tarkīb).’ (Yāfīfī, 1887: 15)

In the remainder of the article, Yāfīfī confirms that he does not want to change the language in itself, because he acknowledges the importance ‘to understand the language and make oneself understood.’ It is clear that he considers the Arabic language as one, for all the Arabs or speakers of Arabic, to which he refers as ‘‘abnā’ al-luğah al-‘arabīyah’’ (the sons of the Arabic language), not only in the present but also in the past, since it was the language of the books of the forefathers (‘agādād). In his opinion, an Arab has to be able to express himself in eloquent Arabic (luğah ‘arabīyah faṣīḥah), which has to be of good expression (ta’bīr) and construction (tarkīb).

Although knowledge of Arabic is somehow seen as an innate quality, namely being ‘a son of the Arabic language’ implies at least metaphorically that one is born with it, in reality Arabic can only be acquired by thorough study. The ambiguity can be related to the double meaning of ‘malakah,’ which is on the one hand an innate faculty or talent, a natural disposition or characteristic, but which on the other hand can also be acquired.

Probably Kazimirski’s explanation (1860: 1152) covers the double meaning best: ‘vertu acquise et qui par un exercice continuels ressemble à une qualité innée’
(an acquired virtue which, by means of continuous training, resembles an innate quality). This is why it is hard to translate the term, since depending on the context in which it is used it is either an innate quality or something that can be acquired by training. So, sometimes it comes close to a natural disposition or a natural faculty, and sometimes to mastery after long exercise. It is clear that this can cause serious problems for the definition, on linguistic grounds, of who is Arab, since it should ideally be the person who has an innate faculty (malakah) to speak flawless Arabic. This faculty, however, was already ‘lost and corrupted’ in the 14th century if we accept Ibn Haldūn’s statement (see above) and probably even earlier.

The fuṣḥā-ʿāmmīyah debate is at least partly about whether this situation (namely the fact that apparently the Arabs are not able (anymore) to adhere to the norms of fuṣḥā, something the ‘original Arabs’ are supposed to have been able to do) should be accepted and even institutionalized – namely by standardizing a form of Arabic that is naturally spoken– or whether this situation is unacceptable and should be changed – by making the Arabs adhere (anew) to the norms of fuṣḥā. The majority of Arab intellectuals did and does not accept the linguistic situation as it was and is and does not reach the conclusion that one might change the linguistic standards and as such the (implied) standards for being an Arab. The ones who proposed different forms of identification by changing the linguistic norms, namely through the standardization of (a) different form(s) of Arabic, were and are heavily attacked. If one refuses to change the parameters, then the only solution is to train the Arabs in such a way that their knowledge of the Arabic language becomes an innate faculty again. Ways of achieving this is one of the other topics that is discussed in the debate.

The identification of Arabness on a linguistic basis was already and age-old practice as is exemplified by Arabic monolingual and translating dictionaries. The term that is most often used in Arabic to refer to Arabness is urābah, which twentieth-century dictionaries most often translate as ‘Arabism, Arabdom, the Arab idea, the Arab character’ (Wehr, 1980, 601). ‘Urābah is also the masdar (verbal noun) of the verb ‘araba, which Kazimirski translates as ‘Être essentiellement arabe, être arabe de bon aloi,’ when is used to describe a person, and ‘n’être pas déparé par des locutions étrangères,’ when is used to describe the language (Kazimirski, 1860 (vol.2): 206). An Egyptian linguistic, Ibrahīm Anṣī stated in his book ‘Al-fuṣḥā bayn al-qawmīyah wa al-ʿāmmīyah’ that urābah is a synonym for Arab nationalism (al-qawmīyah al-ʿarabīyah), which he defines as

’a state of mind that invited the Arabs before and after Islam to be drawn to each other and to assemble to each other in a differentiated being and unified feelings, and a wish to work together to establish stability, security and comfort between them. This is Arab nationalism which is only represented in the Arabic language.’

(Anṣī, 1970: 204)
As such, in Anis’s opinion, ‘urūbah or Arab nationalism is not based on ethnicity (gins) or lineage (nasab) (Anis, 1970: 204).

The Arab dictionaries also link ‘urūbah – as the verbal noun of the verb, ‘aruba,’ to fasāha. For instance Lisān al-‘arab gives: ‘A man is Arab: he speaks Arabic being a pure/eloquent Arab’ (‘aruba ar-rağul ‘urūbatan wa ‘urāhiyatan wa ‘arabān wa ‘urūban takallama bi-al-‘arabiyah wa kāna ‘arabīyan fasīḥan.) Larousse gives: ‘He speaks Arabic with eloquence, he is eloquent.’ (takallama bi-al-‘arabiyah bi-fasāha, faṣuha). So the person who speaks flawless and eloquent Arabic is an Arab. It thus becomes clear why the discussion of the meaning of fasāha (eloquence) is considered so important by the participants in the debate, because its outcome would determine on a linguistic basis who is an Arab and who is not. But since ‘Arabness’ has a linguistic basis, this linguistic criterion becomes an essential one. In the sub-debate (1881-1882) the discussion evolved around what fasāha really means an established set of linguistic norms and a defined corpus, or a general principle of being clear and understood in one’s speech.
PART III
Chapter 7: Al-Muqtaṭaf and the debaters

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

In this chapter, I want to look at the Al-Muqtaṭaf sub-debate (1881-1882) from a different point of view. Whereas in the four preceding chapters, my point of view was an ‘internal’ one, analyzing patterns of argumentation and recurrent mechanisms of labeling and categorization as they appear in the texts, I would now like to approach the sub-debate ‘as a whole,’ as an event. This will allow us to better grasp the role, significance and positioning of this event in the history and wider context of the fusha-“‘ammîyah debate in general, and ultimately to set the stage for the discussion in Chapter 8, where a final picture of that general debate is my objective.

I will do this through three discussions. First, the channel in which the debate was conducted, the periodical Al-Muqtaṭaf will be described in more detail than I have done in the introduction. The general purport of the periodical and the intellectual orientation of its editors, Ya‘qūb Şarrāf and Fāris Nimr, will be described in its historical context.

Secondly, the overall structure of the 1881-1882 sub-debate now also needs more attention, which also includes a chronology of the eleven articles that constitute it.

Thirdly, in order for the patterns of argumentation, labeling and categorization, I analyzed in the preceding chapters to gain real, historical significance, their authors need to be situated biographically and, above all, in relation to the epoch in which they operated and which they helped take the shape we know it had.
The medium of the debate: Al-Muqtataf

Al-Muqtataf (1876-1952) was one of the most influential periodicals in the Middle East. It was founded by Ya'qub Sarruf and Faris Nimr, together with Sahn Makariyas (director), in 1876 in Beirut.

Eli Smith and Cornelius Van Dyck are said to have given the first impulse for the publication of Al-Muqtataf and probably they arranged for it to be printed on the university presses of the SPC. It is also said that Van Dyck chose the name 'Al-Muqtataf' (Salibi, 1965: 147).

After the dismissal of Sarruf and Nimr from the SPC in the aftermath of the so-called Lewis-affair (Farag, 1972), which is discussed in more detail below, Sarruf and Nimr moved to Cairo in 1884, from where they continued to publish Al-Muqtataf. The last issue of Al-Muqtataf appeared in 1951/1952.

The sources are somewhat contradictory as far as the exact closing date of the periodical is concerned. Philipp (1985) claims that 'Al-Muqtataf withered away and died quietly in 1951' (Philipp, 1985: 153), while Choueiri (1995) says that the 'the new régime of the Free Officers closed down both Al-Mukattam and Al-Muqtataf in 1952' (Choueiri, 1995: 49). Anyway, Al-Muqtataf did not survive its main driving forces, since Nimr died in 1951, Sarruf had already died in 1927.

Since science was the main interest of its publishers (see below in this chapter), Al-Muqtataf was first of all a scientific journal. However, although the front page introduces Al-Muqtataf in that capacity, stating that it is a 'scientific and industrial magazine that appears the first of each month,' the topics dealt with in Al-Muqtataf were not limited to these topics.

Apart from treating various scientific subjects and the latest scientific developments in the West, often by translating and summarizing books and articles written in European languages, articles with a cultural and social scope found their way into Al-Muqtataf as well.

Ayalon (1995) describes the scope of Al-Muqtataf as follows:

'It popularized science, from anatomy to astronomy and from physics to veterinary medicine, discussed social and philosophical 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. [...] Many readers whom al-Muqtataf exposed for the

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1 In Arabic: 'garida `ilmiyah sinaiyyah tuqdar kull `awwal al-šahr' Later on the subtitle slightly changed into 'mağallah `ilmiyah sinaiyyah ziraiyyah' (Scientific, industrial and agricultural magazine).
first time to the systematic presentation of modern, basically secular knowledge gratefully acknowledged the benefits they derived from it.’ (Ayalon, 1995: 53)

The important role of Al-Muqtataf as a channel in which scientific knowledge and knowledge from and about the West was popularized and circulated is also confirmed by Philipp (1979).

'It is perhaps his [Zaidan’s] greatest merit – a merit he shares with the editors of “al-Muqtataf”, Faris Nimr and Yaqub Sarruf – to have popularized knowledge about the West and about the learning and scientific achievements that were the product of this modern civilization.' (Philipp, 1979: 116)

Many important Arab intellectuals submitted their contributions to Al-Muqtataf, either in the form of articles or letters to the publisher. Ayalon (1995) also refers to the fact that Al-Muqtataf was a learning school for many beginning journalists who acquired their first journalistic skills while working for Al-Muqtataf.

'Sarruf and Nimr were the paper’s leading spirits, but many other intellectuals contributed as well, including Shibli Shumayyil, Iskandar Ma’ufi, Farah Antun, Jurji Zaidan, Muhammad Kurs 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.’ (Ayalon, 1995: 53)

Moreover, Al-Muqtataf was also the forum for a wide range of debates, of which the fusha-`aminfah debate was only one. In 1880, Sarruf and Nimr opened a section that was specifically devoted to ‘Debate and correspondence’ (Al-munathrah wa al-murtasalah). It is in this section that all but the first two articles2 of the sub-debate between 1881 and 1882 were published.

In order to have some idea about the scope of the debate, it is important to know how widely Al-Muqtataf was read. It was undoubtedly one of the most popular and famous periodicals of its time, and as such it was comparatively influential. However, as I have already indicated in Chapter 2, the impact of the debate should not be overestimated, since only a small minority was able to read and write, and a still smaller minority could afford to buy periodicals. Ayalon (1995) estimates that Al-Muqtataf’s readership reached about 500 during its Beirut years, and about 3000 when it was published in Cairo (Ayalon, 1995: 53). Even if these numbers are quite high in comparison to the total readership of other journals, when we take into account that Al-Muqtataf circulated throughout the region, it is

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2 The article by Sarruf and Nimr themselves and Al-Yazigi’s article appeared as regular articles, while all the other articles were published in the ‘Debate and correspondence’-section. This gives them a somewhat different status.
clear that only a very small percentage of the Middle Eastern population was reached. As such, we can only conclude that the debate was followed by a very small readership and that it was conducted by an even smaller elite of intellectuals.

This brings us to the participants in the debate. In the next section I will discuss who they actually were (insofar as information was available) and how their personal and intellectual backgrounds relate to their positions taken in the debate.
THE DEBATEERS

One of the participants in the debate is not an individual, but a literary organization, namely, the Damascene Literary Society. All the other participants are individuals. However, two of them are anonymous, namely Al-Munkin and H.H. It is obvious that it is quite impossible to find any information about them at all, unless their real identity can somehow be uncovered. On the other hand, some of the debaters were or were to become famous intellectuals, journalists, linguists, poets, and or political activists.

For instance, both Şarrāf and Nimr were known as teachers at the SPC, as the publishers of the very successful periodical Al-Muqṭataf (and later on also Al-Muqaṭṭam), as translators, as writers and as political activists. Ḥalîl Al-Yâzîqī belonged to a well-known Lebanese intellectual family. His father Nâṣîf and his brother Ibrâhîm, were famous as writers and poets. Ibrâhîm was also the publisher of another widely read journal, Al-Dîyâ‘. However, Ḥalîl does not seem to have had the same reputation as his well-known family members. Unfortunately, much more information is available about Nâṣîf and Ibrâhîm than about Ḥalîl. As‘ad Dâgîr was known for his contributions in the written press, not only in Al-Muqṭataf, but also in many other Arabic periodicals. He was also active in several literary associations. Qandalaft was a teacher and a translator. He was also among the founding members of the Arabic Language Academy in Damascus in 1919.

Some biographical information about Şarrāf, Nimr, Al-Yâzîqī, Dâgîr and Qandalaft is thus available. Since many of these intellectuals were active in several domains of society, I had to gather information by putting together bits and pieces from a wide variety of sources, such as biographical dictionaries, historical works, histories of journalism, and so on. Most sources do not give very detailed information, and apart from repetitions of the same information, I encountered also much contradictory information.

Concerning Şarrāf, Nimr and their journal, I was unfortunate not to be able to consult Nadia Farag’s unpublished PhD. thesis ‘Al-Muqṭataf 1876-1900, a study of the influence of Victorian thought on modern Arabic thought’, written in 1969. I assume that it might have provided me with additional details.

Ya’qūb Şarrāf (1852-1927) and Fāris Nimr (1856-1952)

Şarrāf and Nimr opened the debate as the co-authors of the article ‘Al-luqāh al-‘arabîyah wa al-naqāh’ (The Arabic language and success). Many sources (Diem, 1974: 170, Gully, 1997:83-84, 118) refer only to Şarrāf as the author of the article.

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However, the article itself was not signed and therefore it can be considered an editorial. Since both Șarrâf and Nimr were the editors of Al-Muqtataf, and since there are no indications that only one of them actually wrote the article, they must be considered as co-authors of the article. Moreover, the other participants in the debate refer to the article as written by ‘Al-Muqtataf,’ or as ‘both the editors of Al-Muqtataf,’ by using the dual form in Arabic, (muḥarrirāt al-muqtataf) (Society, 1882a: 552 [3], 555 [10]; H.H. 1882: 690 [1]). Also Al-Mumkin refers to ‘both the editors of Al-Muqtataf’ (mu‘allifay al-muqtataf), as well as ‘the long experience of both of them’ (‘iḥtiḥāruhumā al-ṭawīl) (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [1]). This implies that their contemporaries knew that they were both responsible for the article.

As will be shown, the biographical information about Șarrâf and Nimr provides us with a deeper understanding of their position taken in the debate and the ways in which it is embedded in their general intellectual orientation. Therefore, I consider this information an essential aspect of the analysis of the debate.

Moreover, since they were the editors of Al-Muqtataf, they had some influence on the development of the debate in this periodical. They could decide whether or not to publish an article or letter, as well as how to publish it. For instance, both their own article and Al-Yazığ’s appeared as independent articles, while all the others appeared in the section of ‘Debate and correspondence.’ In that way, the contributions were somehow given a different status. It is also not inconceivable that many other reactions were submitted to Al-Muqtataf, which were simply not published. The decision not to publish a contribution could of course have had several motivations. The arguments in the article could have been too redundant or too extreme and ‘unscientific.’ The writing style could have been too bad, and so on. Of course, this is very hard to retrieve and can only be speculated about. The only reason to mention the possibility at all is to stress the special position occupied by Șarrâf and Nimr in the debate as the editors of Al-Muqtataf.

In many sources the names of Șarrâf and Nimr are given in one breath. This is quite understandable since both men had similar careers, of which the publication of the successful journal Al-Muqtataf was an important part. They both studied at and graduated from the faculty of Arts and Sciences at the SPC in Beirut,

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4 See also other references to the publishers of Al-Muqtataf: ‘al-‘adibīn al-mawma ‘ilayhimā’ (both the authors mentioned above) (Society, 1882a: 553 [3]), ‘muḥarriray al-muqtataf wa ḥallihumā’ (both the publishers of Al-Muqtataf and the friend of them both) (Society, 1882: 555-556 [10]).

5 In the Arabic text ‘mu‘allifay’ is even vocalized (a ẓaddah and a fathah on the wāw and a fathah on the fā’) in order to avoid any misunderstanding.

6 See also ‘munṣī‘î al-muqtataf’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [10]).
and they both ended up teaching there after their graduation. They were active members in the same organizations, such as the Freemason Lodge of Beirut, the Syrian branch of YMCA, and several literary and scientific organizations. They also shared the same intellectual orientation, for which they were eventually expelled from the college. As a result of their expulsion they decided to move to Cairo, from where they continued the publication of *Al-Muqtaṣaf*. Moreover they were close friends for life.

*Yaʿqūb Ṣarrūf* was born in *Al-Ḥadath* (Lebanon), a village near to Beirut, on the 18th of July 1852 and died in Cairo on the 9th of July 1927 (Fontaine, 1997: 66). Fontaine says that he was of a Maronite origin (Fontaine, 1997: 66), while other sources mention that he was of Greek Catholic descent, and still others mention that he was of Greek Orthodox origin (Salibi, 1965: 147) before converting to Protestantism.7

After completing his primary and secondary education in respectively the primary school of *Ṣāq al-Ǧarb* and the secondary American school of ‘Abayh, *Ṣarrūf* became a student at the faculty of Arts and Sciences of the SPC in 1867, which was its foundation year. He graduated in 1870. After teaching in various American mission schools he started teaching Arabic and Physics at the SPC in 1873 (*Dāgīr*, 1955: 541, Farag, 1972: 73).

*Fāris Nimr* was born in Ḥāsbayyā in South Lebanon in a Greek-Catholic family. Some sources state that he was of Greek Orthodox origin (Salibi, 1965: 147), while others state that he was of Arab Orthodox (Choueiri, 1995: 48) or of Greek Catholic origin. *Nimr* eventually converted to Protestantism.8

*Nimr* was educated in missionary schools9 and after a short career of five years in commerce, he started his studies at the SPC in 187110 from which he graduated in 1874 (*Dāgīr*, 1972: 1353). Upon graduation he started teaching Latin

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7 This confusion may be related to the general religious atmosphere in nineteenth-century Christian circles, in which (multiple) conversion and re-conversion were quite frequent.

8 See previous footnote. None of the sources give further information on the circumstances of the conversion of *Ṣarrūf* and *Nimr* to Protestantism. However, Philipp (1979) suggests that their conversion might have been related to their employment at the SPC (Philipp, 1979: 57). This might offer an explanation for the fact that despite their secular and scientific orientation *Ṣarrūf* and *Nimr* still bothered to convert to Protestantism.

9 He studied five years in an English school in Jerusalem. He had moved to Jerusalem with his mother in 1863 (*Dāgīr*, 1955: 1353).

10 Choueiri mentions 1870 (Choueiri, 1995: 48).
and astronomy at the SPC. Nimr was also Cornelius Van Dyck's assistant at the astronomy lab.

During their careers at the SPC both Sarrāf and Nimr became closely related to Cornelius van Dyck, who may be considered their mentor. Van Dyck was an American missionary, who had arrived in Beirut in 1840. Philipp (1979) states that he was the only non-theologian in the American mission in Syria (Philipp, 1979: 18-19f.). He was actively involved in education as a teacher, as well as in the translation of textbooks into Arabic.11 As mentioned in Chapter 2, he also translated the Bible into Arabic together with Eli Smith and with the help of Buṭrus al-Bustānī, Nāṣīf Al-Yāciği and Yāsuf Al-Asīr. In addition, he also worked as a physician. In 1867 he started teaching at the SPC (Philipp, 1979: 18-19f., 34).

Cornelius van Dyck was also the person who stimulated Sarrāf, Nimr and Şāhīn Makāriyās (who also had been a student at the SPC) to start the publication of Al-Muqtataf in 1876.

William van Dyck, Cornelius' third son, who started teaching at the SPC in 1880 and Edwin R. Lewis, who taught there between 1881 and 1882, were also influential in the intellectual development of Sarrāf and Nimr (Philipp, 1979: 19f.).

Sarrāf's and Nimr's intellectual orientation can be described in general as secular and scientific. This was also the general orientation of Al-Muqtataf, which was first of all a scientific journal. In my opinion, Sarrāf's and Nimr's general intellectual and political orientations are closely related to the specific positions they take in their article, as well as the general political and intellectual implications of the debate, which they initiated.

The most important elements in their political and intellectual orientations are secularism and science, and more specifically Darwinism, their membership in the Freemason Lodge of Beirut and several literary and political associations, as well as their political activism against Turkish dominance.

**Darwinism**

Both Sarrāf's and Nimr's thinking was strongly influenced by the theories of Darwin (1807-1882)12, to which they were introduced at the SPC and for which

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11 For an overview of Van Dyck's Arabic textbooks, see Tibawi (1966: 293). Among them are manuals on chemistry, astronomy, pathology, and so on, which were used at the SPC. Van Dyck also wrote textbooks for schools. His books were used as teaching materials at Al-Őisr's school in Tripoli, for instance.

12 Darwin's most famous work 'On the origin of species. The struggle for life' was published in 1859.
they were eventually dismissed in July 1884. As a result of the expulsion, they decided to leave for Cairo at the end of 1884 or in early 1885\(^\text{13}\) (Farag, 1974: 73, 81).

Probably it was William van Dyck who introduced Darwinism to Şarrāf and Nimr, and many other Arab intellectuals, by bringing Darwin’s books to Beirut. W. Van Dyck also submitted some contributions to Al-Muqtaṣaf about Darwinism (Farag, 1974: 75). In the same way as Cornelius and William van Dyck and Edwin Lewis and many other secularizing intellectuals of their time, Şarrāf and Nimr supported Darwin’s theories. Şarrāf and Nimr wrote extensively on these theories in Al-Muqtaṣaf (Philipp, 1979: 21) and as such, they were responsible for the popularization of Darwinist theories. Farag also mentions how they tried to remove the widespread prejudices among their readers and colleagues, by arguing that the idea was not unfamiliar in ancient Greek and Arab thought (Farag, 1974: 74).

Therefore, the Darwinist tone of some of their arguments in the fusha-dimmayyah debate should not surprise us. This is, for instance, exemplified in their argument that both Classical Greek and Latin were important and rich ancient languages, but that ‘the laws of nature (ṣarā‘i’ al-ṭabi‘ah) compelled the speakers [of these languages] to abandon them,’ and that if the Arabs would do the same, they would only ‘have followed the natural course which compels languages to change with the changing of the times (al-maqrā al-ṭabī‘ī al-qādī ‘alā al-lugāt ‘an taṭaqayyar bi-taqayyar al-‘aẓmān)’ (Şarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353 [3]). Thus we get a description of languages as living beings that are submitted to the laws of evolution and change.

However, their belief in (social) Darwinism was also related to a deeper form of scientific optimism, namely the belief that the general spread of science in a society was related to general prosperity and the success (naqād) of a society. I want to remind the reader here that the most important impetus for opening the debate was the observation that science was more widespread in the West and that as such Western societies were much more prosperous than Arab society. The main reason then for discussing linguistic issues was the question of spreading science to all layers of society. It is also not accidental that the title of their article was ‘Al-luqāh al-arabiyyah wa al-naqād’ (The Arabic language and success).

It is worth mentioning here that Şarrāf translated ‘Self Help’ of Samuel Smiles\(^\text{14}\) into Arabic, which he published in 1880 under the title ‘Sīr al-naqād’

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\(^{13}\) There seems to be some confusion in the sources concerning the exact year in which Şarrāf and Nimr left for Egypt. Both Antonius and Salibi mention 1883 (Antonius, 1979: 81f.; Salibi, 1965: 147). Fontaine mentions that Şarrāf and Nimr emigrated in March 1885 (Fontaine, 1997: 66) and Choueiri also mentions that the SPC terminated their contract in 1885 (Choueiri, 1995: 48).
(The secret of success). One of the main themes of the book was the importance of educating the members of a state into person with character (‘ablāq), moral discipline (tarbiyāh) and the habit of industry (‘īghtād) in order to insure the progress of a state (Mitchell, 1988: 108-109). ‘Sīr al-naḡāḥ’ became a very influential book in the Middle East, not the least since it was used as a textbook at the SPC for several years (Mitchell, 1988: 108-109). The importance of ‘Sīr al-naḡāḥ’ is also illustrated by its influence on the personal life and intellectual development of Ḥūrḫī Zaydān, as described by Philipp (1979):

‘One profound change, however, occurred in Zaydān’s analysis of society when he used the social Darwinist terminology. He introduced the factor of social mobility. The survival of the fittest meant for him as it did for the social Darwinists, that any individual regardless of his original social position, could rise in the social hierarchy by hard work, self-discipline and perseverance. Zaydān, himself, made the point explicitly when writing in his autobiography about the impression the book Self Help had made upon him.’ (Philipp, 1979: 68)

Moreover, the scientific and secular orientation of Sārāf and Nīmr, and hence their journal Al-Muqṭaṭaf, also offers an explanation for the general absence of religious arguments in the debate.

The role of Darwinism and scientific secularism in general have been discussed in a more general way by Philipp (1979):

‘The role of Darwinism in modern Arab thought has yet to be investigated adequately. Darwinism was more than just one particular scientific theory. It

14 'Self Help, with illustrations of Conduct and Perseverance' by Samuel Smiles was published for the first time in 1859. The success and influence of the original is indicated by the fact that it was reprinted at least 72 times (Mitchell, 1988: 197[41]).

15 This translation was financially sponsored with money that was raised by the Syrian Improvement Committee, an English foundation that sponsored Protestant missionary activities in the Middle East (Tibawi, 1966: 279).

16 For an assessment of the impact of the ideas of 'Self Help'/'Sīr al-naḡāḥ' on the policies of the British administrators in Egypt and the Egyptian intelligentsia during the last decades of the nineteenth century, see (Mitchell, 1988: 108-109). Note that Sārāf moved to Egypt in 1884.

17 Ḥūrḫī Zaydān (1861-1914) was a writer, journalist and thinker who was born in Beirut. Zaydān had been a student of van Dyck, Sārāf and Nīmr at the SPC, which he left after the conflict concerning the theories of Darwin. After working about a year for Al-Muqṭaṭaf, he founded his own journal Al-Hīdāl in 1892, which soon became one of the most influential Arabic periodicals and which continues to be published until now. Ḥūrḫī Zaydān's life and thinking have been extensively treated by Thomas Philipp. See (Philipp, 1973; Philipp, 1979; Philipp, 1985; Philipp, 1990) See also (Sawaie, 1987)
promised the key to a scientific explanation and analysis not only of nature but of human society and its historical development as well. The importance of science in general and Darwinism in particular for the Arab intelligentsia was that it seemed to provide a secular rational answer to tradition and to religion: "... the religion of science was a declaration of war on older religions". Šiblī Šumayyil, an early graduate of the medical school of the Syrian Protestant College was to become one of the main protagonists of the evolutionary theory in the Arab world. Ya'qūb Šarrāf and Fāris Nimr had published in their magazine "Al-Muqtaṭaf" articles about Darwin and the theory of evolution already before the speech of E. Lewis which triggered the crisis at the College. "Al-Muqtaṭaf" also later dealt with the concepts of evolutionary theory." (Philipp, 1979: 21)

Freemasonry
The commitment of Šarrāf and Nimr to freethinking, which was strongly related to their scientific orientation, was also exemplified by their membership in the Freemason Lodge of Beirut. There were at least two Lodges in Beirut, founded in 1862 and 1869, respectively. In Egypt, however, the first Lodge had already been founded in 1832 (Philipp, 1979: 22-23).

An assessment of the general influence of Freemasonry is given by Philipp, even though he emphasizes that further research is needed.

"The same belief in science and rationality that led the Arab secular intelligentsia to adopt Darwinism with such enthusiasm caused a great number of them to join the organizations of the Freemasons. Here, as in the case of Darwinism, we are still lacking any serious evaluation of the role of the Freemasons in the Middle East. In the Middle East even more than in Europe their organization the belief in an enlightened universal rationality in which the Freemasons tried to replace the irrational dogma of specific religions. This rationality was to unite man beyond the petty limits of his own religious background. The importance of Middle Eastern Freemasonry was its aim to provide a framework in which members of various religious communities could meet and co-operate in the same rational spirit." (Philipp, 1979: 22)

The argument that the Freemasons Lodges played an essential role in providing a framework where religious and denominational differences could be overcome is also confirmed by Zeine, who refers to the fact that notable Muslims were encouraged to become members of the Lodges (Zeine, 1973: 53).

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18 An interesting detail is that the logo on the front page of Al-Muqtaṭaf represented a quill and a hammer crossing each other, which is reminiscent of the compass of the Freemasons. (See the front page of the Appendix.)
The influence of Freemasonry is maybe most visible in the Ṣarrāf’s and Nimr’s conviction that prosperity should be given a rational basis. As I have already suggested above, one of their main concerns in the debate is the observation that in the Arab world science is not as widespread as in the West. Ṣarrāf and Nimr are convinced that a society can only be prosperous if all social layers can benefit in more or less the same way from scientific achievements.

The main question was then how science could be made accessible to all social classes, since it was obvious to them that in the situation as it was, science books could not be understood by the ‘āmmah. The dilemma was then whether scientific language should be adapted in such a way that it would become comprehensible to the ‘āmmah, or whether the ‘āmmah should be educated so that they would be able to understand the scientific language as it was.

As discussed in the previous chapters, Ṣarrāf and Nimr did not take an unambiguous stance. On the one hand, they suggested that languages inevitably change, as if they are submitted to the natural laws of evolution. On the other hand, they believed in the manipulability of reality, suggesting that it would be better that the spoken language would be elevated to the level of the written language. If ‘teachers compel’ their pupils to speak correct Arabic and fathers their sons, then it will take only twenty years until the spoken language becomes like the written language’ (Ṣarrāf & Nimr, 1881: 353-354 [4]). As such, they created a certain tension between the inevitability of natural laws and the belief in the manipulability of society.

**Literary and scientific organizations**

Zeine (1973) also suggested that the Masonic Lodges functioned as a recruitment place for the various literary and scientific organizations. Some of these organizations are said to have been cover organizations for political (anti-Ottoman or anti-Turkish) action. The members of such organizations were often young Christian intellectuals who were dissatisfied with Ottoman policies in Lebanon. Knowing that in order to achieve their separatist, or at least emancipatory, aims, they also needed the support of Muslims, they tried to rally Muslims to their cause (Zeine, 1973: 53).

This analysis is also supported by Kayali (1997):

‘There were at least two secret groups in Syria with alleged or declared separatist aims. First, a society led by Faris Nimr was active between 1875 and 1883. It was composed of young Christians who attempted to rally both Christians and Muslims around an anti-government and anti-Turkish program, with emphasis on a literary-cultural Arab identity.’ (Kayali, 1997: 33)
However, both Zeine and Kayali stress the fact that these initiatives were restricted to a very small group of intellectuals and that as such these organizations did not yet form the basis for a nationalist movement (Zeine, 1973: 52; Kayali, 1997: 34).

Both Şarrāf and Nimr were active members, and in some cases co-founders of several such organizations. For instance, Şarrāf and Nimr were both important members of an organization that was called ‘Al-mağma’ al-’ilmī al-šarqī’ (The Oriental Scientific Association), which was apparently founded in 1882. Other prominent members were Buṭrus and Sālim Al-Bustānī, Ibrāhīm Al-Yāziḡī, and Cornelius Van Dyck. The fact that Şarrāf and Nimr played a crucial role in the organization is exemplified by the fact that the organization was dismantled when they left for Egypt (Philipp, 1979: 25f.).

Unlike one of its predecessors, the Oriental Association (Al-ġamʿiyah al-šarqiyah), which was founded by the Jesuits in 1850, the membership of the Oriental Scientific Association was not restricted to Christians, but included also Muslims and Druzes (Philipp, 1979: 25f.).

Moreover, Nimr was also one of the co-founders of a branch of YMCA in 1869, Şams al-birr, of which many students of the SPC became members (Philipp, 1979: 22).

Fāris Nimr was also a member of a secret organization that was founded in Beirut around 1876\(^\text{19}\) and that was responsible for spreading anonymous anti-Turkish placards in Beirut, Damascus, Tripoli and Sidon in 1880. These placards called for the emancipation of the Arab lands (Antonius, 1979: 83-84; Zeine, 1973: 55). Zeine (1973) considers these placards ‘among the first expressions of Arab nationalist sentiment during the second half of the nineteenth century’ (Zeine, 1973: 55).

As is exemplified by their scientific commitments, as well as their membership in the Freemason Lodge in Beirut and several literary and scientific organizations, we can conclude that Şarrāf and Nimr were committed to overcoming religious and denominational differences.\(^\text{20}\) They tried to create a basis for solidarity between Christians and Muslims of all denominations. This was apparently related to anti-Turkish feelings and the idea of emancipating Lebanon from Turkish rule. It is not

\(^{19}\) Kayali (1997) states that Nimr led this ‘Beirut secret organization’ between 1875 and 1883 (Kayali, 1997: 33). Antonius (1979) says that Nimr mentioned to him in a personal interview that the organization had 22 members. Basing himself on a telegram from the British consul in Beirut of 1880 concerning these placards, Antonius was able to reconstruct some of their content (Antonius, 1979: 81-84).

\(^{20}\) It is worth to mention that Nimr lost his father at the age of four in the civil war in 1860 (Daşgır, 1972: 1353).
clear whether at this stage emancipation implied secession or emancipation within an Ottoman framework.

What is obvious, however, was that they felt that this could only be achieved by constructing an identity that went beyond religious differences and that could be shared by all people of all religions. As will be This identity was to be Arab and first and foremost to be based on a common language, culture and past.

Halil Al-Yaşığı (1856-1889)
The first reaction to Sarrāf’s and Nimr’s article appeared in Al-Muqtaṣaf the next month (December 1881) and came from Halil Al-Yaşığı.

After briefly summarizing the three solutions that were proposed by the editors of Al-Muqtaṣaf, Al-Yaşığı opted squarely for the third solution, namely to replace the spoken language, al-’āmmiyah, with the written language, al-faṣṭah.

He stated that the first solution, namely, replacing Arabic with another language would only be beneficial if also the spoken language was replaced by this foreign language, and this is impossible. The second solution, the replacement of the written language with the spoken, would cause the destruction of the heritage of all that had been previously written in Arabic and the necessity of creating a similar heritage for the future. Moreover, each one of the spoken languages differs so much from the other that one of these folk languages will have to be selected to become the written language. Therefore, the same problem will have to be faced, namely how all the folk languages can be transformed into one language.

As a result, it is better to return the folk languages to al-luqāh al-faṣṭah. In Al-Yaşığı’s opinion this is not only the best solution due to the qualities of al-faṣṭah, it is also the most feasible.

However, Al-Yaşığı is also critical toward the Arabic language users. They are too infatuated with writing in an ornamented style which only specialists can understand. As such, he pleads for the use of a simple and comprehensible, but correct writing style when the ’āmmah are addressed.

In order to support his point he ‘quotes’ a classical source, stating that real eloquence (faṣṭah wa balāğah) depends on comprehensibility, and not on

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21 In this context the sources traditionally only refer to Christians and Muslims. Jews are conspicuously left out. It would be interesting to find out to what extent Jews were involved in, for instance, the Lodges of Beirūt and the literary organizations. As far as the fiqhā – ’āmmiyah debate is concerned, I did not encounter contributions of Jewish authors on the subject. However, in Egypt Ya’qūb Sannī (1839-1912) was a well-known Jewish playwright and journalist who often wrote in Cairene Arabic. His satirical journal ‘Abū Naṣṣārah Zarqa’ was widely read. (Booth, 1992: 425) See also (Samu, 1998: 7-8).

22 See Chapter 6.
complex stylistic devices. The epic story of 'Antarah and the stories of Thousand and one nights are in his opinion examples of such simple, but correct language use.

He concludes his article by mentioning that he is working on a book, apparently a kind of dictionary, in which he collects words from al-'ammīyah (al-'alfāz al-'āmmīyah) with their equivalent in al-faṣīḥah.

This book is probably 'Al-ṣaḥīḥ bayn al-'āmmī wa al-faṣīḥ.' However, in a biographical work of 1972 it is still mentioned as a manuscript. Unless it has been published recently, the book has never been published (Dāǧir, 1972: 1412).

Ḫalîl stemmed from the well-known Lebanese literary Al-Yāziği family. In my sources Ḫalîl Al-Yāziği is not given as much attention as his father, Nāṣif and his brother, Ibrāhīm. His early death at the age of 38 in 1889 may offer an explanation for this. Nevertheless, Chejne (1969) states that he was a teacher and a poet (Chejne, 1969: 134). Brockelmann (1938) also refers to the fact that he was gifted for music and that he wrote opera's with themes from classical Arabic literature (Brockelmann, 1938: 767).

Brockelmann (1938) states that, in 1881, he founded in Cairo the periodical Mir‘at al-ṣaqq (Brockelmann, 1938: 767). However, according to Dāǧir (1972) the magazine was founded by Salīm ‘Anḫūrī in 1879, who passed it on to Ḫalîl Al-Yāziği and ‘Aмīn Nāṣif. After the ‘Urābī revolution (1882) they stopped its publication (Dāǧir, 1972: 1411). Ayalon (1995) does not refer to Al-Yāziği at all when he discusses the Mir‘at al-ṣaqq.25 (Ayalon, 1995: 44).

After his stay in Cairo, Ḫalîl Al-Yāziği returned to Beirut24 where he started to teach at the Patriarchal School and at the SPC (Dāǧir, 1972: 1411). However, due to the stricter religious criteria that the SPC imposed on its teaching staff in the aftermath of the Lewis affair, Al-Yāziği's contract with the SPC was ended in 1886 on religious grounds (Tibawi, 1966: 292 f.74).

The elevated social and intellectual position of the Yāziği's, (about which more below), is also confirmed by the respectful ways in which Ḫalîl Al-Yāziği is addressed in the debate. It is true that the debaters always addressed each other in polite terms, which was obviously a stylistic characteristic of nineteenth-century journalism, but Ḫalîl Al-Yāziği is addressed by special terms of address and by combining several polite forms of address.

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23 Ayalon states that the weekly Mir‘at al-ṣaqq was founded by a Syrian, Salīm ‘Anḫūrī in Cairo 1879 who subsequently let it to Ibrāhīm Laqqānī, who was disciple of Al-Afghani (Ayalon, 1995: 44).

24 Unfortunately, Dāǧir does not mention when.
For instance, Al-Mumkin refers to him as 'ġannāb al-kāṭib al-bārī' al-šaykh Ḥalīl Al-Yāziği,' (which in English would translate as "the honorable and excellent writer, the šaykh Ḥalīl Al-Yāziği") (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [1]). In the same article he refers to him as 'ġannāb al-šayḫ' (the honorable šayḫ) (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 495 [3]).

Ḥalīl's father, Nāṣif Al-Yāziği (1800 (Kafr Šimā) – 1871 (Beirut)) was a famous writer and poet. He had worked in his youth as a secretary and court poet for Baṣhr Al-Ṣihābī.25 Even though Nāṣif had written some poetry in Lebanese Arabic, most of his prose and poetry is written in a classicizing style. His most famous prose work is Mağma' al-Bahrāyn of which the style is reminiscent of Al-Ḥarīrī’s maqāmāt.

In the 1840s he had left his native Kafr Šimā26 for Beirut where he met Buṭrus Al-Bustānī with whom he became close friends. He also met with the American missionaries, Cornelius van Dyck and Eli Smith and, together with Al-Bustānī and Yūsuf Al-Aṣīr, he assisted them with their translation of the Bible into Arabic. Nāṣif also wrote an Arabic textbook for the SPC.

Another famous descendant of the Yāziği family was Ibrāhīm Al-Yāziği (1847-1906), who was also a son of Nāṣif. He was a writer and also the publisher of yet another influential Arabic periodical, namely Al-Ḍiyā'ā. He is considered to be one of the most controversial linguists of the 19th century because he was often involved in polemical linguistic debates, which were fought out in the printed press. He was most often attacked for his prescriptive linguistic positions, as exemplified by his numerous articles in Al-Ḍiyā' on linguistic mistakes and solecisms, which seem to have been his favorite subject.

He criticized, for instance, the newly developing journalistic style, which was often characterized by its search for new terminology and its simplified language use. He published two series, each one of them consisting of 14 articles27, on this subject with the title ‘lağat al-ğarā’id’ (lit.: The newspaper language).

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25 The Greek Orthodox Yāziği’s stemmed originally from Damascus where during the 18th century they had close relations with the local governing ‘Azm family. However, when the fortunes of the ‘Azims changed for the worse, ‘Abdallāh Al-Yāziği fled to Mount Lebanon. After converting to the Unia (namely, becoming Greek Catholic) ‘Abdallāh established his position with the Lebanese ruling Šihāb family. (Haddad, 1970: 66-67) Haddad makes a great effort in arguing that the family did not lose its Greek Orthodox identity, claiming that ‘Abdallāh only converted out of necessity (Haddad, 1970: 76). Nevertheless the family does not seem to have reconverted.

26 Kafr Šimā is a small village near Beirut. Also Šibīl Šumayyil and the Taqlā brothers, the founders of the famous Egyptian newspaper, Al-‘Abrām, originated from Kafr Šimā. (Haddad, 1970: 76)

27 The first series of these articles appeared every two weeks in Al-Ḍiyā' between 15 January 1899 and 31 July 1899. The second series appeared every two weeks between 15 January and 31 July 1905.
These articles were later collected and published as a book with the same title. He also published a series of 10 articles on 'the [linguistic] mistakes of the Arabs' ('aglāt al-‘arab) in 1901, an article on 'written solecisms' (al-lāhīn al-kitāhī) in 1904, and a series of 10 articles on 'the [linguistic] mistakes of the muwalladān' in 1906.

Between January 1902 and 31 March 1902 he also wrote 5 articles on 'al-luğah al-‘āmmiyah wa al-luğah al-fushā,' which I will discuss in the next chapter.

Al-Mumkin, 'The Possible' (anonymous)

Al-Mumkin submitted three articles to Al-Muqtaṣaf, which were published in January 1882, March 1882 and June 1882, respectively.

As we have seen, he is the only participant who defends the opinion that the written language must be replaced by the spoken language. We have also seen that he is heavily attacked for this opinion.

Al-Mumkin was also the only participant who discussed religion in a slightly more detailed way than the others, by arguing that it is not dramatic that Arab Muslims speak a language that differs from their liturgical language. He also referred traditional jurisprudence books (based on the šarī‘ah) to specialists, arguing that the laws based on religion will be replaced by secular laws (niẓām).

These are the only secularizing arguments in the debate. The rest of the debate can be described as secular because religion is simply not mentioned. Therefore, I concluded in the previous chapter that the debate was secular (because of the absence of religious arguments), but not explicitly secularizing, by which I mean that the relation between al-fāṣīḥah and Islam is not explicitly dismantled.

Because he knew that he would be attacked for his opinions, Al-Mumkin decided consciously to remain anonymous and choose a penname Al-Mumkin (The Possible), as an expression of his belief in the feasibility of his proposals. Because of his anonymity, I have no further information about Al-Mumkin’s personal and intellectual background. Also his writing style and lexical preferences do not provide us with any further clues.

His first article Mustaqbal al-luğah al-‘arabiyyah (The future of the Arabic language) was a reaction to the two previous articles, written by Šarrāf and Nimr and by Al-Yāziḡ, respectively.

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78 The series ‘‘aglāt al-‘arab’ appeared every two weeks in Al-Ḍiyā‘ between 15 April 1901 and 31 August 1901.

79 The series ‘‘aglāt al-muwalladān’ appeared every two weeks in Al-Ḍiyā‘ between 15 January and 1906 and 31 July 1906.
Al-Mumkin confirms Şarrāf and Nimr’s claim that the ‘āmmah are not able to understand scientific books in the way they should, by stating that he experienced this personally.

Al-Mumkin then continues by strongly disagreeing with Al-Yaẓīġī’s assertion that the common people are able to understand scientific books on a purely linguistic level since they understand the story of Antarah and other epic stories. First of all, Al-Mumkin argued, it is not because the common people understand epic stories that they are able to understand scientific books and, secondly, they do not even understand these stories in much detail. Al-Mumkin thus disagrees with Al-Yaẓīġī that the difference between al-‘āmmiyah and al-faṣīḥah is not all that large. He stresses that this linguistic difference is the main reason for the comprehension difficulties that the ‘āmmah encounter when reading scientific texts, and not the scientific content alone.

Al-Mumkin then asserts that al-faṣīḥah itself was created by unifying and standardizing the spoken languages of the Arab tribes into one language, arguing that the numerous synonyms in Arabic are an indication of this. He further argues that if the scholars of the first centuries of the Hijra were able to achieve this unification and standardization, then nineteenth-century scholars should be able to collect and unify al-‘āmmiyah.

He further argues that both the editors of Al-Muqtataf and Al-Yaẓīġī exaggerated the losses that would be caused by abandoning al-faṣīḥah out of conservatism and love for the fatherland. In his opinion, most Arabic books are not useful anymore because they do not deal with the modern sciences. Those books that have not lost their relevance can easily be translated into the folk language, with the exception of religious books which should be kept intact. It will be the task of religious specialists to study and interpret them. The fact that Arab Muslims will not speak the same language as their liturgical language is not dramatic in Al-Mumkin’s opinion, since also Greek Orthodox Christians, Catholic Christians, as well as Persian and Turkish Muslims speak languages that differ from their liturgical languages.

The same goes for language books, which are also referred to the domain of specialists. Al-faṣīḥah will become a venerated classical language, in the same way as Latin, Classical Greek and Sanskrit are venerated classical languages. As such, al-faṣīḥah will not die. Jurisprudence books can be disposed of since the religious law is replaced by a secular law, which is to be written down in the folk language.

In the next issue (February 1882), two reactions to Al-Mumkin’s article were published: one written by the Damascene Literary Society and one written by As‘ad Dāği̇r.
The Damascene Literary Society
The most striking element in this article is that the Society explicitly relates language to mind and to society, and argues that the quality of language use is directly proportional to the quality of the mind of the language user, as well as to the quality of groups of language users.

So, after arguing that human beings are differentiated from animals because they use language, and that (the quality of) language is a differentiating factor in the evaluation of both individuals and communities, the Society argues that the Arabic language, and as such the Arabs rank very high. In short, the Arabs have the most superior minds and language.

Moreover, the Arabs have a very rich literary and scientific heritage, which was created by the painstaking efforts of Arab scholars throughout the centuries. The value of this heritage is still intact, even if many works were lost over time. Even the Westerners still borrow from it. Many so-called ‘Western discoveries’ were already discussed by Arab scholars, centuries before the Westerners made them.

After this introduction, in which its linguistic position is embedded, the Society turns to the actual topic of the debate. After briefly summarizing the three options as presented by the editors of Al-Muqtataf, the Society also summarizes the positions of Al-Yāziği and Al-Mumkin. Al-Muqtataf’s and Al-Yāziği’s opinion is approved of, while Al-Mumkin is rebuked: only the third solution, the replacement of the spoken language by the written is realistic and beneficial.

The replacement of Arabic with another language can only be beneficial if also the spoken language is replaced with this other language, and this is impossible.

The replacement of the written language with the spoken language is then described as a ‘literary and political danger.’ Again, the close relation between language and community/nation (‘ummah) is stressed, since the disappearance of a language also means the disappearance of the ‘ummah. This is illustrated by the ‘scary’ example of Maltese. Moreover, the replacement of the written language would also mean the loss of the literary heritage and as such a new literary heritage must be created. The diversity of the folk languages and the unfeasibility of their unification into one language is mentioned as the main reason for the impossibility of doing this.

Returning these folk languages to the original language (al-luğah al-‘aṣlīyah), by which the Society means al-faṣīlah, is more beneficial because of its inherent linguistic superiority over the folk languages. Moreover, if lexical oddities are avoided, the āmmah can easily understand it, while the folk language is very odd and incomprehensible in a written form.

Then the Society attacks Al-Mumkin, because he based his claim that the āmmah are not able to understand al-faṣīlah on his observation that they do not understand every word of pre-Islamic poetry. In their opinion, Al-Mumkin should
have known that pre-Islamic poetry is a special register of Arabic, which contains many strange words that are rarely used.

Moreover, in general, the comprehension of scientific texts does not depend only on linguistic skills, one also needs a specific scientific background. If not, all the French would be able to understand all texts written in French and this is not the case.

The Society then turns to the faṣāḥah-balāghah (eloquence) discussion arguing that words that have become obsolete, can no longer be considered to be eloquent, even if they were at a certain moment in time, illustrating its argument with a poem of Al-Saaff al-Ḥillī.

The rest of the article consists of the explicit refutation of Al-Mumkin’s arguments, which are briefly summarized and introduced with the phrase ‘wa ʾammadā zaʾmuhu’ (concerning his claim).³⁰

First of all, the Society does not accept Al-Mumkin’s argument that it is possible to unify the folk languages into one language. Even if the analogy with what happened in the case of al-faṣāḥah is accepted (which the Society considers a false analogy), the motivation for the unification of al-faṣāḥah is absent in the case of the folk languages.

The Society then refutes Al-Mumkin’s argument that there are no relevant Arabic books on the modern sciences, stating that this is a false argument. One should not be misled by the so-called modernity of the new sciences, since these are the ancient sciences in a different form. All modern sciences are based on ancient sciences, even if some new elements were added. In these ancient sciences, the Arabs were the real masters. Moreover, these new additions can easily be translated into Arabic.

The Society also heavily rebukes Al-Mumkin’s suggestion that the Arab Muslims will become like the non-Arabs, reading the Koran only as linguistic forms without understanding them, arguing that the Muslims will never accept this.

Al-Mumkin’s criticism that Sarrāf and Nimr and Al-Yāziġī exaggerated the loss that is related to the replacement of the written language out of conservatism and love for the fatherland is not warranted, since one must be proud to be a patriot.

In conclusion, they refer to the president of the Charity Society of Damascus (Al-ǧāmʿiyah al-ḥaḍrīyah al-dīmaṣqūyah), Ṣayḥ ʿAlā al-Dīn Efendi who took the initiative of writing a book facilitating the replacement of the spoken language with the written for the ʿāmmah.

³⁰ Other phrases that are used to introduce Al-Mumkin’s arguments are ‘ʾammā ʿaṣaʾwēhi’ (concerning his claim) and ‘wa ʾammadā ʿādāra bi-hi’ (concerning what he referred to) (Society, 1882a: 555–556 [9], [10]).
Unfortunately, I did not find any information on the Damascene Literary Society. The only thing we know is what we can derive from its name, which is that it was one of the many literary organizations and that it obviously operated from Damascus.

As said above, some of the centers of intellectual life in the Eastern Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire were formed by the literary and scientific organizations, which mushroomed during the second half of the nineteenth century. Many intellectuals were members of one or more such organizations. As we have indicated, especially Christians were active in them. Even though some associations had an exclusive Christian membership, many associations were at pains to attract both Muslims and Christians in order to overcome religious differences.

Despite the lack of information on the members of the Damascene Literary Society, we can find, in the article itself, some small indications that at least part of the membership was Muslim. When the Society referred to the fact that Arab Muslims will never accept that they will read the Koran in a language that they do not understand, the Koran was referred to as ‘al-kitāb al-‘azīz’ (The Noble Book). Even though some Christians intellectuals were quite familiar with the Koran and Islam in general (some even chose to study Arabic with a Muslim šayḫ) and lived on respectful terms with Muslims, it seems unlikely that they would refer to the Koran in such a way. In their case ‘The Noble Book’ would be the Bible. I know that this is quite a shaky basis to decide on the identity of a society, but until more information is available, we must rely on this indication.

Asʿad Dāḡir (1860-1935)
In the same issue of Al-Muqtaṭaf and immediately following the Society’s article, Dāḡir’s article was published under the title ‘Istihālat al-mumkin ‘idā’ amkana’ (The impossibility of the possible if it were possible), which is of course an allusion to the pen name Al-Mumkin.

In a poetic introduction, Dāḡir argues that the prosperity of a country is directly related to the ‘promotion of science’ and the ‘battle against ignorance.’ The scientific discoveries and inventions will stimulate commerce, industry and agriculture.

However, and here he repeatsṢarrāf and Nimr’s observation, the difference between the spoken and the written language impedes complete prosperity, because the ‘āmmah are not able to understand the scientific books written by the ḥāṭmah.

31 For instance, Dāḡir sometimes inserted quotes from the Koran in his texts, which indicates his familiarity with the Koran.
After summarizing the three possible solutions, Dāgir agrees with Ṣarrāf and Nimr, and with Al-Yāziği, that the only valuable solution is the third one, namely the replacement of the spoken language by the written.

He also explicitly rebukes Al-Mumkin’s opinion, saying that the pen name ‘Al-Mustahfil’ (The Impossible) would have suited him better. He then continues to present his arguments for disagreeing with Al-Mumkin.

First of all, the folk language contains too much diversity in order to be used as a writing language. Dāgir refers to both comprehension problems (would the Iraqi understand a book written in Syrian?) and attitudinal problems (would the Maghribian not laugh at such a book and would the Egyptian not ridicule it?). Moreover, he argues that even within the Syrian language there is a lot of diversity.

He then refers to his personal experiences as a teacher in Ġabal Al-Nuṣṣayrīyah, where the pupils were not able to understand him when he spoke his own vernacular, but could when he addressed them in al-faṣṭah. Based on this experience, he then concludes that each folk language is closer to al-faṣṭah than to other folk languages.

In contrast to the diversity of al-‘āmmīyah, al-faṣṭah is characterized by internal unity and if there is some diversity within al-faṣṭah, it is caused by differences of opinion between the linguists describing it. Moreover, it has an inessential character. Dāgir concludes that al-faṣṭah is everywhere and for everyone essentially one and the same language.

Moreover, al-faṣṭah is linguistically superior to al-‘āmmīyah, which he describes as, among other things, ‘disgusting’ (samīghah) and ‘senseless jabber’ while in contrast describing al-faṣṭah as having a rich lexicon and precise grammatical rules.

Dāgir also questions Al-Mumkin’s integrity, suggesting that he might be among those people who want to replace Arabic with another language. When he noticed that he could not spread these ideas, he then turned to the defense of the folk language. But Dāgir has to admit that he does not know this for sure and he acknowledges that it is a sin to be suspicious without a reason. (Here he quotes the Koran.)

Even though As‘ad Dāgir was a very active journalist who participated in many linguistic debates (as will appear also in the next chapter), as he was actively involved in politics right before, during and right after World War I, there is not much information available about him.

As‘ad Ḥalil Dāgir was born in Kafr Šinā (Lebanon)32 in 1860. After completing his education at the High School of ‘Abayh, he studied at the SPC in

32 Note that this was the village where also Şiblí Al-Šunayyil, the Yāziği and the Taqla families originated from.
Beirut. He was active as a writer, poet, journalist, teacher and translator (*Dāgīr*, 1955: 351-354).

*Dāgīr* was actively involved in the political scene after World War I. He was a member of the first administrative committee of the Independence Party, which, needless to say, struggled for Arab independence. *Dāgīr* was among the Party’s delegates who appeared before the King Crane commission, which was an international inquiry commission the League of Nations sent to the Middle East in 1919 in order to investigate the wishes and aspirations of the inhabitants of the Middle East (Tauber, 1995: 50-52). Also in 1919, *Dāgīr* founded *Al-‘Uqāb* in Damascus. This organization represented *Al-‘Ahd Al-‘Irāqī*, which was yet another important society striving for independence (Tauber, 1995: 183). *Dāgīr* collected his political memoirs in a book titled ‘*Muṣakhirrāt ‘alā hāmiṣ al-qādiyyah al-‘arabiyah*’ (My memoirs on the sideline of the Arab Case).

*Al-Mumkin* then reacts to the articles of the Society and *Dāgīr*. His second article appeared in *Al-Muqtataf* in March 1882.

From this moment on, the polemical side of the debate becomes increasingly important. Almost no arguments are added and arguments are repeated over and over again. The debaters also start to focus on small details in order to try to discover small and big mistakes in each other’s arguments.

It is maybe for this reason that Gully (1997) refrained from discussing the rest of the articles, concluding that

‘As Diem notes (1974: 129), the arguments in favour of the superiority of the classical language were always the same: the rich cultural heritage of the Arabs, Islam, namely that the classical language is the language of Islam; and the united character of classical Arabic. It was often argued too that the dialects were consequently inferior and too disparate to be seen as the more suitable medium for progression.’ (Gully, 1997: 87)

33 The Independence Party was the external and public organ of *Al-Fatat*, and was founded in 1919.

34 The main demands of the Independence Party can be summarized as follows: the complete independence of an undivided Syria (here: the region between the Taurus Mountains in the north, Raifah and Aqaba in the south), the Syrian desert (in the east) and the Mediterranean (in the West), an absolute rejection of French interference, the banning of Zionist immigration into Palestine, and a refusal of subjugation to a Mandatory Power (Tauber, 1995: 52).

35 It seems to have escaped Gully that Islam was almost never mentioned, at least in this part of the debate.
Al-Mumkin's reaction to the Society's article is divided into 8 arguments. At this point the debate becomes polemical. First of all Al-Mumkin formulates his reaction against the Society. He subdivided is reaction into eight points, introducing them by 'al-'awwal' (the first), al-fānt (the second), and so on. I indicated these numbers after each argument.

Al-Mumkin states that he does not doubt the superiority of the Arabs and the Arabic language. (1) Neither does he doubt that Arab scholars wrote an enormous number of scientific works. (2)

He also repeats his argument that the 'āmmah do not understand scientific books because of the linguistic difference between the written and the spoken language. He rhetorically asks which book a folk person would understand better: a book written in al-'āmmīyah or one written in al-faṣīhah. He polemically adds that if it is the first one, then his point is sustained. If it is the second, then there is no need for books that facilitate al-faṣīhah for the ‘āmmah, such as the ones that Al-Yāziğî and Shayh ‘Alâ' al-Dîn are writing. (3)

He then argues that he did not ask a folk person to understand pre-Islamic poetry, but rather somebody who did not study the language well, which is in his opinion not the same. (4)

Subsequently, he turns to the question of eloquence (faṣīhah – balâghah). He refutes the Society's argument that there is a relative notion of eloquence, arguing that the general opinion of the specialists is that a word that was once considered to be eloquent (faṣīhah) always remains eloquent, even if it becomes strange or obsolete. (5)

Al-Mumkin also feels that the Society neglected his historical argument that al-faṣīhah itself was created by unifying the tribal languages of the Arabs. (6)

Al-Mumkin also stresses the fact that numerous new sciences were developed during the nineteenth century, refuting the Society's contention that all the modern sciences are based on the ancient sciences and that new discoveries should not be overestimated. Al-Mumkin refers here to the translation movement in Egypt during the 19th century, stating that the Egyptian government was definitely aware of the value and importance of Arabic, but that it nevertheless was at great pains to translate numerous books from European languages. (7)

Finally, Al-Mumkin adds a quote of Ibn Ḥaldûn in order to sustain his opinion that the folk language became a separate language, separate from al-faṣīhah, and that this was already the case during Ibn Ḥaldûn's life. If the difference was already so large at that time, namely in the 14th century, it can only have increased in the 19th century. (8)

He also adds a short reaction to Dâgin's article, with the subtitle 'Reaction to ‘istiḥâlat al-mumkiân 'iddâ 'amkana.'
Again, he stresses his belief in the possibility of the unification of the folk languages, despite their diversity (which he recognizes), since this is what happened in several other languages. (1)

Al-Mumkin also strongly reacts against Dāğir’s description of the folk language as disgusting, senseless jabber, and so on. He stresses that the folk language is a separate language that is appropriate for all purposes. (2)

In conclusion, Al-Mumkin asserts that it is also possible to make everybody speak al-faṣṭṭah, but that it will take much more effort than unifying and standardizing the folk languages. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that also this will require an incredible amount of effort. But it is not impossible since many communities/nations (‘umam) have achieved this.

Al-Mumkin concludes that at the end, both camps have the same aim, namely the spread of science and the welfare of the fatherland and the nation.

The following month (April 1882), three reactions appeared in Al-Muqatta‘af.

The first one is from yet another anonymous author, who signed his article with the initials H.H. and ‘aḥad ‘ansār al-ṣuqūd al-‘arabīyah’ (One of the defenders of the Arabic language). The second one was written by Mitīr Qandalaft. The third one is a very short reaction of the Damascene Literary Society in which it states that it has already forwarded its arguments in its first article and that there is not need to repeat them once again.

H.H. (anonymous)

H.H. reacts directly to Al-Mumkin’s arguments by repeating the beginning of each of Al-Mumkin’s eight arguments and then adding his personal opinion. His aim was to uncover Al-Mumkin’s mistakes, as is suggested in title of his article ‘Kašf al-gaṭā’ ‘ammā fī kalām al-mumkin min al-ḥaṭā’ (Uncovering the mistakes in what Al-Mumkin said). (Note also the rhythm and end rhyme of this title.) H.H. does not refer to Dāğir’s article, but only the Society’s.

First of all, H.H. briefly summarizes the main arguments of the debate.

He then turns to Al-Mumkin’s eight arguments, which he briefly summarizes after the phrase ‘qāla al-fāḍil al-mumkin al-‘awwal’ (the respected Al-Mumkin said, first of all), then ‘fāniyān’ (secondly), and so on. He always adds his own argument, after the phrase ‘aqāla ‘inna’ (and I say that). Note also the polemical side of the debate.

H.H. refers to Al-Mumkin’s first two arguments in which he stated that he does not dispute the superiority of the Arabs and the Arabic language and that he neither disputed that there exist numerous scientific and industrial works written in Arabic. H.H. argues that the Society only mentioned these elements by way of
introduction and that as such they are not part of the dispute. H.H. wants to suggest that *Al-Mumkin* has no knowledge of the art of debating, since otherwise he would not have included these elements in his discussion. H.H. adds that *Al-Mumkin* indirectly disputed the second point. (1, 2) This is a way of polemically lowering the position of his opponent.

Concerning the third argument, namely that the ‘āmmah would understand a book written in the folk language better than one written in *al-faṣṭḥah*, H.H. argues that *Al-Mumkin* must write a book in *al-‘āmmifāh* in order to sustain his claims by applying them. (3)

H.H. then repeats that if *Al-Mumkin* had reflected well on *Al-Yāziği*’s article, he would not have asked a folk person to understand pre-Islamic poetry, since it is generally known that it contains many odd and obsolete vocabulary items. He also argues that there is no essential difference between a folk person and somebody who did not study language well, since somebody can be considered a folk person in relation to what he did not study well. (4)

H.H. then turns to the debate on what real eloquence is, adding new elements and new quotes (from *Talḥif al-miftāḥ*) in order to support the existence of a relative notion of eloquence. (4-5)

H.H. also does not accept *Al-Mumkin*’s complaint that the Society neglected his argument that *al-faṣṭḥah* itself was created by unifying and standardizing the languages of the Arab tribes. He refers to the fact that the Society accepted this hypothesis only for the sake of argument, since it is not at all a generally accepted theory. Moreover, H.H. repeats the argument of the Society that even if this hypothesis is accepted, the motivation for the unification of the tribal languages of the Arabs is absent in the case of the folk languages. Again he quotes attitudinal objections, arguing that no Arab would accept to replace or mix his own vernacular with another vernacular. (6)

H.H. refutes *Al-Mumkin*’s contention that the ancient Arabic science books are no longer relevant in modern times, stating that most French scholars (*‘akťar ulamā’ firansā*) would not agree with *Al-Mumkin*.(7)

Moreover, *Al-Mumkin*’s claim that those books which cannot be disposed of can easily be translated to the folk language, is in H.H.’s opinion a false one. H.H. argues first of all that the Society already referred to the fact that a text written in the spoken language would be as incomprehensible as a Circassian text. Moreover, even though he quoted *Ibn Haldān* as saying that the ‘natural disposition of the sedentary language disappeared and became corrupted already since centuries,’ there has never been a proposal to replace the written language with the spoken language since the corruption of *al-faṣṭḥah*. (8)

H.H. concludes his article with some polemical answers to *Al-Mumkin*’s previous polemical remarks.
Mitrî Qandalafî (1859-1933)
Immediately after H.H.’s article, another reaction to Al-Mumkin’s article was published.

After referring to the idea that this debate is a forum for the pure patriot to express his opinions and discuss the opinions of others, Qandalaft states that he wants to discuss two points of the debate: the reason why the ‘āmmah do not understand science books written in al-faštah (1) and the argument that other nations also changed their (written) languages (2).

First of all, Qandalaft argues that the comprehension problems of the ‘āmmah are not related to the language itself, but rather to the writing style (a simple and comprehensible language should be used) and the bad structure of such books (they should be well structured, with good introductions and clarifications). Qandalaft thus also reacts against the Society, since he is convinced that if complex scientific theories are explained in a simple (but correct) language, it is possible to understand them without the help of a teacher or professor. Recent translations of scientific books and the articles in Al-Muqtataf prove this.

Qandalaft then turns to Al-Mumkin’s refutation of a relative notion of eloquence. Qandalaft adds new quotes in order to further support this notion.

Secondly, Qandalaft argues that the comparison between the Arabic language situation and that of Western countries is a bad comparison. Latin became corrupted because of the invasion of the northern European tribes and because the Romans mixed with them. As such the original language (Latin) became a mixture of several languages that could not be returned anymore to their origins. Concerning Arabic, Qandalaft argues, this is not the case as it is not the case for Greek.

Mitrî Ibrâhîm Qandalaft was born in Damascus in a Greek Orthodox family, but he converted to Protestantism. After receiving his primary education at local schools in Damascus, he became largely an autodidact. Apart from Arabic, he mastered Turkish and English.36

He was active as a teacher and translator. For a while he taught English and sociology in several Syrian private schools (Al-Ḥaṛib, 1969: 118). Apart from that he translated several sociological books into Arabic.

During World War I the Ottomans exiled Qandalaft, together with many other Arab intellectuals, to Turkey. Because he had to leave suddenly, he lost his precious library. At the end of the war, he returned to Damascus.

36 Apparently he learned English from an American lady who worked for the Protestant mission. She stimulated him to convert to Protestantism. He also assisted her in the translation of sermons and religious texts into Arabic. (Al-Ḥaṛib, 1969: 117-118).
The fact that Qandalaft never lost his interest for the Arabic language and language planning is illustrated by his direct involvement in the Arabic Language Academy in Damascus. He was one of its eight founding members in 1919 (Al-Haṭṭīb, 1969: 121). (See also Dāgīr, (1972: 1044-1045).) In 1921 he became the editor of its periodical and in the same year he gave a lecture, titled ‘‘lḥyā‘ al-lugah al-‘arabīyah’ (The revivification of the Arabic language) (Al-Haṭṭīb, 1969: 121).

Qandalaft’s article is immediately followed by a short statement of the Damascene Literary Society. It states that it read Al-Mumkin’s article and that all its answers were already stated in its first article.

Al-Mumkin published his third article on the subject in June 1882. The article was completely devoted to a further discussion of the notion of eloquence. Only in the conclusion the article attention is paid to the question of standardizing the folk language. Al-Mumkin states that he will have to write a book in order to support his position that Arabic, as all other languages of the world, changes over time. Standardizing and using the folk language would only mean that this process is accelerated. Al-Mumkin adds that unfortunately he has no time to write such a book and refers the interested reader to modern Western linguistic works.

In July 1882, Qandalaft submitted yet another reaction to Al-Mumkin’s article. Qandalaft only pays attention to the technical aspects of the discussion concerning eloquence.

It is at this point that the publishers of Al-Muqtaṣaf decide to close the debate, since they conclude that it has deviated from its original subject (how to bridge the gap between the spoken and the written language), in favor of a detailed discussion of the concept of eloquence.
CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, I want to draw attention to some striking similarities in the biographical background of the participants about whom we have information, namely Şarrāf, Nimr, Al-Ŷâziği, Dāgîr and Qandalaft.

Despite the contradictions in the sources, we can conclude that they were all Christians of Greek Orthodox or Greek Catholic descent. We have information that at least three of them, namely Şarrāf, Nimr and Qandalaft eventually converted to Protestantism.

All of them were closely in touch with American or British Protestant missionaries in their professional lives as well as in their personal lives. All, with the exception of Qandalaft, had received at least some of their education in missionary schools. Şarrāf, Nimr, Al-Ŷâziği and Dāgîr had studied at the SPC. Şarrāf, Nimr and Dāgîr received their primary and secondary too at American missionary schools. Even though Qandalaft studied at local Damascene schools, he learned English from a British Protestant lady. Şarrāf, Nimr and Al-Ŷâziği were also teachers at the SPC and had close personal contacts with Cornelius and William Van Dyck.

All of them were actively involved in public life as writers, journalists, translators and educators. Şarrāf, Nimr and Dāgîr were also actively involved in politics. Qandalaft was among the founding members of the Arabic Language Academy, and which was founded with the support of the first Syrian government in 1919, before Syria became officially under French mandate.

We can conclude then that in their capacity as teachers, translators, journalists and writers, all the debaters were actively involved in giving shape to Middle Eastern society at the turn of the century.

For the debaters, scientific progress, modernization and a secular Arab identity were central issues. This is corroborated by the general purport of the debate, which is characterized by its focus on the need of all Arabs for one common language, the almost general consensus that this language had to be al-faṣūḥah and the general absence of religious argumentation, the debaters also laid the basis for a new identity that was basically Arab.

As I have suggested in the previous chapters, these elements were essential for the construction of an Arab identity that was secular (in order to rally support from all Arabs in spite of religious differences), based on the idea of one common language, which had to be al-faṣūḥah in order to maintain the bond with the common Arab past and more specifically the Arab literary heritage.

As regards identity construction, al-‘āmmīyah lacked the linguistic prestige as well as the bond with the Arabic literary and cultural heritage in order to fulfill these symbolic functions, even though strictly speaking it might have been possible
to standardize it into a new common standard language. We know that this was Al-Mumkin's suggestion, even though it had a shaky basis.

However, standard languages cannot just be created and imposed, even if this might be possible from a strictly linguistic position, if there is not a sufficient basis of support for them. As we have seen before, such a basis is never strictly linguistic, but is strongly related to political, social, religious and other non-linguistic considerations.

Yet another reason to support al-faṣīḥah was probably the awareness of the special position of al-faṣīḥah as the liturgical language of Islam. Knowing that a stance too critical of al-faṣīḥah could be easily interpreted as an indirect attack on Islam, as indeed happened in other phases of the debate, and the fact that Muslim solidarity was badly needed, might have been yet another consideration in the debate. This is further corroborated by the fact that, to be sure, no religious arguments were used in order to support al-faṣīḥah, but on the other hand the relation between al-faṣīḥah and Islam was also not directly discussed critically. As such, al-faṣīḥah was not explicitly secularized.

According to Hourani (1962), it was the general tendency of Al-Muqtataf not to discuss local politics and religion directly, in order to avoid hostility (Hourani, 1962: 246).
Chapter 8: Further developments in the fuṣḥā-‘ammīyah debate

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

The debate concerning variability in Arabic has received a lot of attention in the Arab world. In a way one can say that linguistic variability in Arabic has received a lot of attention from Arab linguists, and intellectuals in general, from the moment they embarked on the codification and standardization of Arabic in the ninth century.

During this standardization and codification process, they had to deal with the different so-called readings (girā‘āt) of the Koran, with the tribal poetry and the different linguistic variants (luğāt) of the Arab tribes. The linguistic discussions that accompanied this process, such as the differences of opinion between the schools of Kāfah and Baṣrah, can be considered as early linguistic debates.

Towards the 10th century, Arabic grammar was codified into a systematic descriptive theory. However, linguistic variability continued to receive attention in the so-called lahn-literature, which was mainly focused on frequent linguistic mistakes and their correction.1

However, although linguistic variability did figure as the object of discussion in medieval Arabic literary literature, it seems that the Arabic linguistic situation was generally accepted as it was. We have to wait until the 19th century before the Arabic linguistic situation was seriously questioned and problematized. From this moment on until the present time Arab intellectuals have continued to present reform proposals in order to ‘remedy’ the ‘problems.’

The sequence of eleven articles which appeared in Al-Muqattatf between November 1881 and July 1882 is of course only a tiny part of the fuṣḥā-‘ammīyah debate, since the debate continued right into the sixties of the 20th century. Even today, variability in Arabic continues to be discussed in the Arab world.

Language use in the media and education, for instance, still receives a great deal of, both with regard to the different languages that are used and in relation to the varieties of Arabic. Until the present day many authors consider the so-called ‘diglossic Arabic language situation’ a problem that has to be solved.2

As far as I, know the sequence I analyzed was one of the first occasions on which the issue of the differences between al-faṣṭḥah and al-‘ammīyah was seriously questioned. Nevertheless, Rifā‘at Al-Ṭaḥāwī and Muḥammad ‘Abduh, in

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1 For a discussion of lahn-literature, including examples, see (Pellat, 1993: 605-610).

Egypt, (Ödem, 1974: 130), Butrus Al-Bustānī and Ahmad Fāris Al-Ṣidyāq, in Syria already paid attention to the difference between the spoken and the written language around the middle of the 19th century.

In this chapter, I will discuss the further development of the debate after the nineteenth century on. However, if As'ad Dāgir could already remark in 1902 that 'if we collected what has been written in our Arabic language about the written language and the spoken language only since thirty years, it would make a bulky volume with more than a thousand pages' (Dāgir, 1902: 260), the reader will easily understand that it is impossible to be exhaustive.

Some researchers have already given short overviews of the debate. To begin with, I will discuss these overviews and summaries.

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3 See also (Gully, 1997: 83).
OVERVIEWS AND SUMMARIES OF THE FUṢHĀ–‘ĀMMĪYAH DEBATE

In 1964, Naṣīḥah Zakarayyā Saʿīd presented in a bulky volume an overview and a detailed analysis of the debate in Egypt until the 1960s in Arabic. Because of the way she discusses the materials she takes a very clear position in the debate herself. Nevertheless, Saʿīd’s book, Tārīḥ al-daʿwāʾ ilā al-ʿāmmīyah wa ʿāṯārūhā fī miṣr (The history of the propaganda for the use of al-ʿāmmīyah and its influence in Egypt) is a very rich source of information on the subject.

Saʿīd amply discusses the proposals of Western scholars, such as those of Spitta in 1880 (Saʿīd, 1964: 18-24), Volland in 1895 (Saʿīd, 1964: 24-25), Willmore in 1901 (Saʿīd, 1964: 25-30; 109-114), Powell and Phillott in 1926 (Saʿīd, 1964: 30-32) and Wilcockson between 1893 and 1926 (Saʿīd, 1964: 32-42; 100-109). She did not only pay attention to explicit proposals to replace al-faṣḥāh with al-ʿāmmīyah, but she also discusses the early development of Arabic dialectology after 1800 (Saʿīd, 1964: 9-17).

When discussing the Arab reform proposals, Saʿīd distinguishes between proposals to use al-ʿāmmīyah in limited domains and for specific purposes, and proposals for the complete replacement of al-faṣḥāh with al-ʿāmmīyah. While approving of the first group of proposals, she strongly rejects the latter. In the first group we find the proposals of Al-Ṭahštāwī, who proposed that some subjects could be written in al-ʿāmmīyah in order to educate the common people (al-ʿammah).4

Other writers in Egypt wrote in al-ʿāmmīyah with the purpose of humor and satirical social critique. For instance, the Jewish Yaʿqūb Sānnāʾ did not only write in Egyptian Arabic, but also in Syrian Arabic, Turkish and al-faṣḥāh in order to ventilate his critique on the Egyptian government in his satirical periodicals ʿAbū Naẓārah and Al-Gazālah (Saʿīd, 1964: 75-97). In Saʿīd’s opinion, these proposals and applications of the use of al-ʿāmmīyah were harmless, since they were limited to a certain domain.

The remainder of her book is then devoted to the other proposals, which in her opinion are destructive and dangerous, and to the reactions of the defenders of al-fuṣhā to these proposals. She subsequently pays attention to the debate in Al-Muqtaṣaf in 1881-1882 (see below), the proposals of Westerners in Egypt and the reactions these proposals triggered. Next, she devotes a chapter to specific developments in linguistics, which led to an increased interest in the study of dialectology, as well as calls for the simplification of Arabic grammar. She also analyzes the Egyptian proposals to Egyptianize literature by using Egyptian Arabic in the literary domain.

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4 See also Diem (1974).
Sa’id’s main stance is that the proposals to replace al-fuṣḥā with al-‘āmmiyah were initiated by Western scholars as part of their imperialist agenda. By destroying al-fuṣḥā they would also destroy the national and religious bonds between Arabs and Muslims in order to subject them more easily to colonial rule.

Another analysis in Arabic of the debate was published by ‘Ā’ishah Abd Ar-Rahmān (also known as Bint Al-Šāṭi’) in 1969, ‘Luṣaunā wa al-ḥayāh’ (Our language and life).

It is characteristic of authors, such as Sa’id and ‘Abd Al-Rahmān, that while presenting a historical overview and an analysis of the debate, they take a clear a position in it as well. Thus, we also have to consider these sources as a continuation of the debate itself.

Diem (1974) also gives a good, but very brief overview of the several periods in which the fuṣḥā-‘āmmiyah debate was conducted in the Middle East. He also pays attention to several other proposals to reform Arabic. He divides the debate into several large phases, but without presenting an analysis.

The first phase is that of the late nineteenth century, in which he discusses the first (1881-1882) and the second discussion (1886-1887) in Al-Muṣṭaṭaf, as well as the opinions of Rifā’ah Al-Ṭahāwī, Muḥammad ‘Abduh and Muḥammad Wafā (Diem, 1974: 129-130). The next phase is what we might call the colonial participation in the debate, consisting of the proposals made by Lord Dufferin, William Willcocks, Fiske and Willmore (Diem, 1974: 130-133). After that comes the period of Pharaonism in Egypt. For this period Diem concentrates on the work of Ahmad Lutfi Al-Sayyid, Ṭantāwī Gawharī, Ahmad Abū Ṣādīq and Salāmah Māsā (Diem, 1974: 133-135). The development of the Arabic Language Academies of Cairo and Damascus is discussed in what he calls the nationalist period (Diem, 1974: 136-138). In conclusion he discusses some individual proposals to language reform, such as those of Ḥasan Ma’āf, Gūrğ Al-Ḥāfīz Al-Maqdisī, Mārūn Ǧuṣn, Gūrğ Al-Ǧaṣfīrī, Antis Frayhah and Sa’id ‘Aql (Diem, 1974: 139-142).

Gully (1997) presents an overview of linguistic polemics conducted at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. These polemics include several debates concerning al-fuṣḥah and al-‘āmmiyah, among them the debate in Al-Muṣṭaṭaf between 1881 and 1882, the debates that were triggered by the proposals of Dufferin, Fiske, Willcocks and Willmore and the reactions to them in the Arabic press.

Gully also pays attention to several other linguistic polemics, for instance, the one between Ibrāhīm Al-Yāṣīṭī and Raṣīd Al-Šurtānī concerning linguistic mistakes in the newspapers and the debate concerning the purification of the language. He does not neglect the personal aspect in many of the debates, where
authors tended to attack the person rather than the content of his articles. (Gully, 1997: 75-120)

Chejne (1969) devotes two chapters of his ‘Arabic. Its role in history’ to ‘leaders of the linguistic movement and linguistic studies’ and ‘problems and proposals for the reform of Arabic’ (Chejne, 1969: 125-144; 145-168).

Other researchers have focused their analyses on a specific phase in the debate.

Suleiman (1996) has presented an analysis which is based on a comparison between the different interpretations of the Egyptianization of the Arabic language in Egypt proposed by Ahmad Luft Al-Sayyid, Salamah Mūsá and Tāhā Husayn. He also demonstrated how their linguistic views were related to the general context of modernization and the construction of an Egyptian national identity.

In their two monographs on the development of the several forms of national identity in Egypt, Gershoni and Jankowski (1986; 1995) have paid attention to the specific role that language played in the construction of these identities. They devote specific attention to the development of an Egyptian national literature (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 191-227), and the debate concerning the Egyptianization of the Arabic language (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 217-221). When Egyptian started to focus on the Arab identity of Egypt, it was accompanied by quite a different view on the role of the Arabic language as well (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1995: 118-120; 127-130).

Also Shraybom (1999) has focused mainly on language policies in Egypt.
PREVIOUS REFERENCES TO THE DEBATE IN AL-MUQTATAF BETWEEN NOVEMBER 1881 AND JULY 1882

Diem gives a very brief summary of the debate in Al-Muqtataf, which he calls ‘Die erste Diskussion in Al-Muqtataf’ (Diem, 1974: 129). He mentions all eleven articles. Gully also briefly discusses the debate, but he only summarizes the first five articles. (Gully, 1997: 83-86) In his bibliography he mentions all eleven of them.

Concerning the exact dates of appearance of the articles, both Diem and Gully refer to the date mentioned on the volumes of Al-Muqtataf, and not to the exact dates mentioned in Al-Muqtataf itself. Checking these dates of the appearance of the article in Al-Muqtataf itself gives a slightly different picture. Only Şarrāf and Nimr’s and Al-Yāziği’s articles appeared actually in 1881 (respectively November and December), while all the other articles appeared in 1882. Diem mentions that Al-Mumkin’s first two articles, the Society’s articles, Dāgir’s article, H.H.’s article and Qandalaft’s first article appear in 1881. Gully, who read Diem’s book takes over these dates, but he does not refer to Qandalaft’s second article. Both Diem and Gully mention only Şarrāf as the author of ‘Al-luğah al-’arabiyah wa al-nağdh’ (The Arabic language and success) while it was written in co-authorship with Nimr. (See Chapter 7) The debate in Al-Muqtataf (1881-1882) was also discussed by Sa‘td (1964). She discussed two articles of the debate in more detail, namely the ones of Hātlī Al-Yāziği and that of Al-Mumkin in order to contrast the opinions expressed in them (Sa‘td, 1964: 94-100).

In her analysis Sa‘td suggests that Şarrāf and Nimr’s proposal (1881) was inspired by Spitta’s book (1880), even though she admits that no specific reference was made to it. However, she suggests that this omitted reference was a deliberate choice in order to make the proposal appear like a purely Arab proposal (Sa‘td, 1964: 94).

However, she does not mention that Spitta’s book was first published in German and that Şarrāf and Nimr were probably not able to read German. What Sa‘td also does not mention is that in 1881 Al-Muqtataf was still being published in Beirut. At that moment Şarrāf and Nimr were probably not so much interested in the specific linguistic situation in Egypt, and probably even less in a proposal to replace al-faṣṭah with Egyptian ‘āmmiyah in Egypt.

Moreover, in their article, they explicitly defended the replacement of the spoken language with the written, even if their position was ambiguous. It seems unlikely that when they published their proposal, they were directly influenced by Spitta’s work.
THE CONTINUATION OF THE DEBATE IN AL-MUQTATAF (1887-1888)

After the debate in Al-Muqtataf (Nov. 1881 – July 1882), the issue of promoting al-‘āmmīyah to a written language was taken up several times. Between October 1887 and February 1888, a new debate flared up in Al-Muqtataf, this time between Șadîd Yâfiş (1860-1923) and As‘ad Dağîr and Ḥayr Allâh Al-Swâyrî. It appeared in a sequence of four articles, all with the title ‘Nağâh al-‘arab bi-ṯâhsîn luqatthîm’ (The success of the Arabs in and by means of the reform of their language) and a letter from one of Yâfiş’s students. This discussion was preceded by an article by Yâfiş in 1886 ‘Al-‘arabîyah wa al-woqît’ (The Arabic language and time), also in Al-Muqtataf.

This discussion, which Diem (1974) refers to as ‘Die zweite Diskussion in Al-Muqtataf’ (Diem, 1974: 129-130), actually mainly focused on Arabic orthography, but also some references to al-faṣîḥah and al-‘āmmīyah were made.

The discussion was opened by Yâfiş who proposed to replace the existing Arabic consonants with consonants that contain vowels. His proposal was triggered by the observation that the acquisition of al-faṣîḥah was far too slow. The orthographic reform he proposed would then solve reading difficulties and the slow acquisition of al-faṣîḥah. Yâfiş also observes that there is a great need to write manuals on all the new sciences in Arabic, as well as good abbreviated Arabic manuals.

Dağîr, whom we already know from the first debate, reacts to this proposal. He argues that the slow acquisition of al-faṣîḥah is not related so much to orthographic problems but rather to the difference between al-‘āmmīyah and al-faṣîḥah and to the detrimental situation of linguistic education at home and in the schools. He observes that many schools have foreign principals who are not interested at all in Arabic language education and who therefore not selective enough in their choice of teachers.

This last observation is an important difference with the previous debate in which no reference whatsoever was made to direct Western influence on the educational system. It is not completely clear whether Dağîr refers to the general educational situation in the Middle East, or to the specific situation in Egypt or that of Lebanon, or Syria. As I hope to have clearly indicated in Chapter 2, the

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5 Șadîd Yâfiş was born in Şwâyr (Lebanon) in a wealthy family. After completing his education in the school of Şwâyr, he studies at the SPC. He was not only a merchant, but also a writer, linguist, and teacher. He was also a member of Al-maġmâ‘ al-‘ilmî al-Ṣarqî (The Oriental Scientific Association), of which Şarîf and Nîmîr were prominent members (Dağîr, 1972: 1417-1418).

6 This title can be interpreted in two ways: ‘The success of the Arabs in the reform of their language’ and ‘The success of the Arabs by reforming their language.’ I think that this double sense is a deliberate choice of the authors.
educational domain in the nineteenth-century Middle East was, although still limited to a small part of the population, quite diversified. Traditional kuttāb and madārisah (pl. of madrasah) existed along missionary schools run by French, British or American missionaries, Ottoman state schools and local initiatives. Most of these schools, apart from the traditional kuttāb and madārisah, followed a Western model of education.

However, only some of the mission schools, mainly the French and English schools, and the Ottoman state schools, seemed to have provided education in languages other than Arabic, namely French, English and Turkish, respectively. The kuttāb and madārisah, the local schools, and the Russian and American mission schools, as well as Muḥammad ‘All’s state schools provided education in Arabic, even though the study of other languages was often part of the curriculum as well.

However, we must keep in mind that the first debate was conducted in Al-Muqtaṣaf, when it was published at that time in Beirut, while the second was published in Al-Muqtaṣaf in Cairo. In 1884 (or early 1885), after their dismissal from the SPC, Ṣarrāf and Nimr moved their journal to Cairo. So, this second debate was mainly conducted in Egypt, although some authors submitted their articles and letters from outside of Egypt.

The British occupied Egypt in 1882. Although English eventually replaced Arabic as a teaching language in Egyptian primary schools, while in secondary schools all subjects except mathematics were taught in English only in 1900 (Tignor, 1966: 326-7), it is quite possible that colonial language policies became increasingly felt during the preceding years.

Moreover, Spitta’s book on the Egyptian Arabic, ‘Grammatik des Arabischen Vulgärdialecctes von Aegypten’ had already been published 1880. Spitta’s book also contained a proposal to replace al-faṣīhah with Egyptian Arabic and, as Rasīd Ṛidā reports in 1902 in Al-Manār that an Arabic booklet containing similar proposals was circulated to the most important Arabic periodicals in Egypt, such as, for instance, Al-Muāyyad in 1898. He also states that at the time he reacted to the content of this booklet (Ṛidā, 1902: 829).

In these reactions Ṛidā mentions that the booklet was anonymous, and he discusses, or rather refutes, its content at length. Unfortunately, he does not mention in which year the booklet was circulated (Ṛidā, 1898: 101-104; 120-128). Thus, it is hard to know whether this proposal circulated in Arabic before 1887-1888, and whether it influenced Dāgīr’s discussion in his exchange with Yāfīṭ.
**Further developments in the fushā-‘ammīyah debate**  

**Willmore’s Proposal (1901) and the Reactions It Triggered**

In 1901, yet another dimension was given to the debate when J. Selden Willmore published ‘The spoken language of Egypt. Grammar, exercises, vocabularies.’ The book was meant to be a textbook for those who wanted to acquire a practical knowledge of Arabic for conversation. As such, Willmore basically argued that it would be better to learn Egyptian Arabic.

Willmore was ‘one of the judges of the native court of appeal at Cairo,’ as is mentioned on the title page of his book (Willmore, 1905: 1). ¹

In addition to offering a description of Cairene Arabic, as he promises in the title, Willmore discusses the general language situation in the introduction of the work. First of all, Willmore compares Cairene Arabic to other Semitic languages, such as Syriac and Hebrew. The way in which he does this clearly indicates that he is convinced that Cairene Arabic could be considered a separate language.

Then he turns to the ‘existence of one dialect for literature and another for conversation,’ arguing that ‘there can be no doubt that the progress of the nation is thereby impeded, and great advantages would be gained if one only were used for both purposes’ (Willmore, 1905: xxii-xxiii).

The problematization of the difference between the spoken and the written language was of course not new. Many Arab intellectuals had already referred to it, at least some fifty years before the appearance of Willmore’s book. And Spitta had done the same in 1880 (see above).

Willmore’s proposal was also preceded by yet another proposal made by a British engineer who was responsible for several irrigation projects in Egypt, namely Willcocks. Willcocks had argued in a lecture held in 1893 that the large difference between the spoken and the written language in Egypt prevented the Egyptians from being really creative. The lecture had the apposite title, ‘Limā lā tāgad quwwat al-‘iḥlāl lādā al-miṣrīyīn?’ (Why do the Egyptians possess no creative power?) ² (Diem, 1974: 131-132).

However, what is new is that Willmore did not only argue that Cairene Arabic could be considered a separate language and that ‘[t]he wiser course would be to throw aside all prejudice and accept [Cairene Arabic], at least for secular purposes, as the only language of the country’ (Willmore, 1905: xxiv).

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¹ See also (Diem, 1974: 132-133).

² Willmore’s book appeared in 1901, and was reprinted in 1905. All quotes are taken from the second edition.

³ This lecture triggered a lot of reactions. Among these reactions was an article by Zaydān, published in *Al-Hilāl* in February 1893 (Zaydān, 1893: 200-204).
The main difference between Willmore’s proposal and, for instance, Al-Mumkin’s proposal to replace the written language with the spoken language, is that Al-Mumkin had one common spoken language in mind for all the Arabs, while Willmore here clearly suggests Egyptian Arabic to be used in Egypt.

Apart from that, the fact that the proposal came from a British official who worked as a judge for the colonial government made it, at least from an Arab perspective, more suspicious.

If reactions to proposals for linguistic reform, such as the replacement of the written language by the spoken language and orthographic reforms, had been severe and fierce, they became even more severe when Westerners got themselves involved in the debate. Usually their proposals were evaluated as imperialist attacks on the Arabic language, with the aim of weakening the bonds between all contemporary Arabs, as well as the bonds between contemporary Arabs and their past, and their religion in the case of Muslims.

Often such proposals were seen by Arab intellectuals as an intermediary step to the replacement of Arabic by one of the colonial languages, mainly French and English. Moreover, Dāgīr, whose article I will discuss in more detail below, reacted in 1902 to the idea of some of his contemporaries that Willmore’s proposal, which they described as an attack on the written language, was ‘a cover for a religious attack from the Cross and the Crescent’ (Dāgīr, 1902: 258).

The view that proposals to replace the al-fāṣīḥah with al-‘āmmīyah were in fact inspired by imperialist agendas, can also be found in later Arab analyses of the debate, of which the work of Sa’īd (1964) is a clear example. Until now this view continues to be very strong in the Arab world.

Willmore’s book triggered numerous reactions in several periodicals.

I think it is interesting to dwell a little longer on some of these contemporary reactions to Willmore’s proposals for several reasons.

First of all, we may consider Willmore’s book and the reactions to it as another important sub-debate of the larger fāṣīḥah-‘āmmīyah debate. However, in contrast to the sub-debate in Al-Muqtataf (1881-1882), it was a debate that consisted of several separate reactions in different journals, but which were all triggered by Willmore’s book. This means that the different authors were not necessarily aware of the other reactions that appeared elsewhere.

Reactions to Willmore’s book came from both Muslims and Christians.

The reactions that I will discuss below were expressed in five articles, published in three different journals, namely Al-Muqtataf (Ṣarrāf, 1902: 187-191; Dāgīr, 1902: 257-263), Al-Hilāl (Zaydān, 1902: 279-282) and Al-Manār (Riḍā, 1902: 827-832; 876-879).

In conclusion I will also discuss an article by Iskandar Ma’lāf, published in Al-Hilāl in 1902. The article is not directly a reaction to Willmore’s book, but rather to Zaydān’s reaction to ‘The spoken Arabic of Egypt.’ The article is interesting because Ma’lāf is in favor of the replacement of the written language with the spoken, but in contrast to Willmore he favors the standardization of the spoken languages into one new written language. As such, his proposal is similar to that made by Al-Mumkin in 1882.

The participants in the debate on Willmore’s book and its medium
First of all, I want to introduce the journals in which the reactions were published, their editors and the writers of the articles. Al-Muqtaṣaf and its editors, of course, need no further introduction.

Al-Hilāl and Ġurğī Zaydān
Al-Hilāl was a successful Arabic monthly that was founded by Ġurğī Zaydān (1861-1914) in 1892 in Cairo. The life and work of Zaydān were studied in detail by Thomas Philipp (1973, 1979, 1990).

Zaydān was born in Beirut. He studied a few years at the SPC, where he met with Sarrāf and Nimr. However, because of the Lewis-affair and its aftermath, he was not able to complete his studies.

In Cairo, Zaydān worked a few years for Al-Muqtaṣaf, where he probably gained a lot of experience, but he started his own journal in 1892. The general purport of Al-Hilāl was quite comparable to that of Al-Muqtaṣaf, even though Al-Hilāl’s accents were rather cultural and social, while Al-Muqtaṣaf focused more on the natural sciences and mathematics (Ayalon, 1995: 54). This is also illustrated by the fact that apparently many subscribers to Al-Muqtaṣaf subscribed also to Al-Hilāl, considering them somehow complementary. The success of Al-Hilāl is also illustrated by the fact that the journal exists until now and that the publishing house, Dār Al-Hilāl is still one of the important publishers of the Middle East. Zaydān is mainly credited for the popularization of many aspects of Arab and Islamic history, which he presented in numerous articles in Al-Hilāl, as well as in several books and historical novels.

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10 Ayalon also asserts that Zaydān offered in 1895 to buy back copies from Al-Hilāl because of the large demand for them among the readers. In 1897 Al-Hilāl reached a circulation of 10,000 issues, not only in Egypt, but also in the other Arab provinces and outside the Ottoman Empire (Ayalon, 1995: 54).
Even though he was a Greek Orthodox Christian he was keenly interested in the history of Islam, about which he wrote several books. However, he focused more on the cultural dimensions of Islam, rather than its theological aspects. For him, Islam was an important aspect of Arab culture. This will also appear from his article in which he reacted on Willmore’s book.

**Al-Manār and Rašīd Ridā**

Al-Manār (1898-1935) was founded in Cairo by Rašīd Ridā (1865-1935). Like many other journalists in Cairo, Ridā was a Syrian. However, unlike Ṣarrāf, Nimr and Zaydān, who were Christians, he was a Muslim.

He was born in a village near Tripoli. After receiving his primary education in a Koranic school and then in an Ottoman state school, he enrolled in Husayn Al-Ǧisr’s school, the National Islamic School. (See also Chapter 2) As such, he did not only acquainted himself with the traditional religious sciences and Arabic, but also with French and the modern sciences (Hourani, 1962: 224).

In 1897 Ridā moved to Cairo, where he became one of the most important disciples of Muḥammad ʿAbduh. He founded Al-Manār in 1898.

Like many other nineteenth-century Arab intellectuals Ridā was preoccupied with the perceived superiority of Western civilization, and tried to find solutions in order to keep pace with the West. Science played an important role in his thinking, but unlike Ṣarrāf, Nimr and Zaydān, scientific thinking did not lead him to secularism. He was rather convinced that there was no opposition between real Islam and scientific and rational thinking. If many contradictions could be perceived, it was because Muslims had abandoned or did not apply real Islam.

The different emphasis of Ridā’s thinking in comparison to, for instance, Ṣarrāf, Nimr and Zaydān, is also exemplified by his use of the term ‘ummah. Whereas these Christian intellectuals used it first and foremost in its secular meaning, namely that of community/society or nation, it is clear that when Ridā uses the term, it usually refers to the Islamic ‘ummah. (For the different connotations of the word ‘ummah, see Chapter 5.)

As we will also see below, for Ridā, Arabic then did not only have the symbolic function of creating a bond between all Arabs, it was also the language in which the Koran was revealed, as it was the language of the religious laws and literature. As such it also created a bond between all Muslims. On more than one occasion, Ridā stressed the importance of the knowledge of Arabic, even for non-Arabic Muslims.

The different religious backgrounds of the writers of the main reactions to Willmore’s book is yet another reason to have a closer look at this debate, since it gives us an opportunity to compare the views of secularizing Christians with that of a modernist Muslim. As we will see, even though they all refute Willmore’s
proposal and they do so in part for the same reasons, the authors also place different accents in their defense of al-fasihah.

Reactions to Willmore in Al-Muqtataf (1902)

Sarrāf’s reaction
Sarrāf reviewed Willmore’s book in Al-Muqtataf in February 1902 (Sarrāf, 1902: 187-191), and he completely distanced himself from Willmore’s view.

First of all, Sarrāf points out that the speakers of languages other than Arabic have paid more attention to the study of Arabic than Arabophones themselves, referring famous scholars, such as Sibawayh and Fayrūzābādī. Recently, many Western scholars have followed their example. (Sarrāf, 1902: 187)

Sarrāf continues that spoken Arabic (al-‘arabīyah al-makhtūbih) has always been different from written Arabic (al-‘arabīyah al-makhtūbih). This was for instance attested by Ibn Haldūn in the 14th century. Nevertheless, nobody has ever tried to examine spoken language’s vocabulary and syntax. On the contrary, people have always been encouraged to adapt their language use to the written language. This is the case for speakers of Arabic, as well as for speakers of English. However, Western scholars have taken interest in the study of the spoken languages of Egypt and Syria. Wilmore’s book is the most recent publication on the subject (Sarrāf, 1902: 187).

Nevertheless, Sarrāf argues, the issue of the standardization of spoken Arabic and its use as a written language has been debated more than 21 years ago. Sarrāf refers of course to the debate he and Nimr opened in 1881 and that was conducted in Al-Muqtataf. This is followed by a reprint of original article that was published in 1881 (Sarrāf, 1902: 187-189).

What is most important for our purposes here, is that after that Sarrāf provides some extra information on his motives for opening the first debate, stating that when he wrote his article in 1881, he was not at all aware of Western perspectives on the Arabic language situation, such as the one expressed in Spitata’s book. Sarrāf emphasizes that he and Nimr only wanted to open a discussion about the ways to approach the spoken and the written language (al-taqrīb bayn al-luḡāh al-makhtūbih wa al-luḡāh al-makhtūbih). He then briefly discusses the debate, referring to the fact that many intellectuals responded to their invitation, mentioning all their names with the exception of Qandalaft. He also refers to the fact that everyone with the exception of Al-Mumkin favored spreading the written language (išāʿat al-luḡāh al-makhtūbih) rather than writing the spoken language (kitābat al-luḡāh al-makhtūbiyyah). (Sarrāf, 1902: 189)

11 They were both Persians.


Ṣarrāf continues that on many other occasions he explained to Europeans and Americans that since the modernization measures of Mūḥammad ‘Alī, the gap between the spoken and the written language has gradually narrowed. Spoken and written Arabic are now related in the same way as spoken and written Italian do. If Mūḥammad ‘Alī wanted to stimulate the use of the spoken instead of the written language, he could have easily done so. But he did not and since intellectuals preferred to write books and newspaper articles in the inflected language (al-luğah al-mu‘rabah), meaning al-faṣīḥah, readers became used to it. Willmore’s proposal simply came too late (Ṣarrāf, 1902: 189).

However, Ṣarrāf suggests and intermediate position. He supports the expansion of the written language (al-luğah al-maktūbah) with words, expressions and metaphors derived from al-‘āmmīyah, as well as with loans from foreign languages.

In short, he states:

‘we have to allow to the Arabic language, what the English allow to English and what the French allow to French, and what all speakers of a living language (luğah ḥayyah) allow to their language.’ (Ṣarrāf, 1902: 189)

Ṣarrāf also rejects Willmore’s proposals to reform the Arabic script, namely by replacing it with Latin script, in which consonants and vowels are represented. Ṣarrāf states that Arab readers have no difficulties whatsoever reading Arabic script as it is, since a skilled reader reads the global word picture and not individual letters (Ṣarrāf, 1902: 190-191).

In conclusion, Ṣarrāf states that Willmore made a great effort putting down the rules of the language of Cairo (daḥṭ luğat al-qāhirah) and that his aims were noble, namely facilitating the spread of science and knowledge in Arabic (tashīl naṣr al-‘ulām wa al-ma‘ārif bi-al-luğah al-‘arabiyah) and facilitating for the foreigners to [how to] speak Arabic (tashīl al-takillum bi-al-‘arabiyah ‘alā al-‘aġānīb). However, his method, namely the use of al-‘āmmīyah in writing, will not lead to his first aim, since the speakers of Arabic revived the inflected language (‘iḥyā‘al-luğah al-mu‘rabah) and its use in books and newspapers increased (Ṣarrāf, 1902: 191).

Dāgīr’s reaction

Another reaction was one written by Dāgīr, ‘Al-luğah al-maktūbah wa al-luğah al-mahkīyah’ (The written and the spoken language). The article was also published in Al-Muqtaṣaf in March 1902.

First of all, Dāgīr refers to the fact that when al-fuṣḥā is at issue, one can expect emotional and fierce reactions. The fact that Willmore now receives a lot of
vehement and fierce reactions to his book is not new and he should not be shocked by it. Others have received a lot of such fierce reactions before. Moreover, Dāgīr is convinced that until the difference between the two rivals (al-'āmmīyah and al-fūṣāh) disappears, linguistic reform proposals will continue to be made (Dāgīr, 1902: 257).

Dāgīr then refers explicitly to the two previous debates in Al-Muqtaṣaf (1881-1882 and 1886-1888) in which he participated as well.

What is most remarkable in Dāgīr’s article is that he criticizes the stance of the defenders of al-faṣīḥah, among them his own, in those two debates. He states that the position he had previously taken was too extreme and too emotional, in contrast to the more moderate position of Muqtaṣaf (e.g. Ṣarrūf and Nimr).

Instead of mindlessly defending the perfection of the written language, al-faṣīḥah, and attacking those who questioned this perfection, they would have better acknowledged that indeed there are some shortcomings in the written language as it is presently used and that they should have spent their time on research to reduce these shortcomings.

Dāgīr refers to the fact that in the debate of 1881-1882, he and others were convinced that the solution for the linguistic question was to make professors and teachers speak to their students only in the inflected language (luḡah muʿrabah). As a result, students would also start to speak Arabic with full inflection.

Since the teachers are often not able to speak in such a way, as the foreign supervisors of the schools in which they teach do not support them in this and since the pupils are not comfortable with it, this was in his opinion a useless idea.

Dāgīr still considers the other proposal made at the time, namely the convening of a linguistic association in order to defend the written language from the spoken language, to be useful. Unfortunately, such an assembly is not yet created.

However, Dāgīr is now convinced that the idea that the written language can ‘defeat’ the spoken language by replacing it, is an illusion. He argues that ‘the difference between the written and the spoken language (al-maktab wa al-makht) is something natural (‘amr țabī‘) that has to exist in every human language,’ and that ‘the strongest powers in the world cannot make it disappear.’ Moreover, this difference has always existed, as it exists in all languages. So, even in the gāhīṭyāh, the Arabs did not speak Arabic with full inflection endings (Dāgīr, 1902: 259).

Dāgīr then tries to explain why the difference between the spoken and the written language seems to be much larger in Arabic than in other languages. He argues that the inflected language, al-luḡah al-muʿrabah, by which he means al-

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12 Note that Dāgīr uses here ‘luḡah muʿrabah’ (lit. inflected language, language with inflection) as yet another synonym for the written language or al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah. He did not use this term in the previous debates (1881-1882, 1886-1887).
fasīḥah, was never intended to be used as a spoken language (luġat takallum), but only as a language for writing (luġat kitābḥ). The folk language (al-luġah al-ʿāmmīyah), on the other hand, is more apt for spoken purposes (Dāġir, 1902: 259-260).

Dāġir describes his earlier position as follows:

'Ve were as extreme as we wanted and we exaggerated the adequacy of the inflected language (al-luġah al-muʿrabah) for both writing and speaking (li-kull maktāb wa maḥkī). We exaggerated the corruption of the spoken language (fasād al-luġah al-mahkiyāh) and its lack of adequacy for anything. Both reality and research invalidated our claim.' (Dāġir, 1902: 260)

Dāġir then continues arguing that al-fasīḥah is not only not adequate for spoken purposes, but that it is also not adequate for writing. However, this does not lead him to propose that al-ʿāmmīyah has to replace al-fasīḥah in writing.

Rather, he stresses the necessity of a linguistic association or language academy (mağma` luġawī) that will be responsible for the coining of scientific terms for all the scientific and technical branches. Their task will also consist in spreading these newly coined terms. In his opinion, this is the only way to protect the written language from the invasion of the spoken language, English and French (Dāġir, 1902: 262-263).

Reactions to Willmore in Al-Hilāl (1902)

In 1902, Ġurği Zaydān published his opinion about Willmore’s proposal in Al-Hilāl. Zaydān wrote his article answering a request from a reader, a certain Hasan Efendi Riyād from Alexandria, who stated that he had read a lot of reactions to Willmore’s book in several journals, but not in Al-Hilāl. Zaydān then answers to his question.

Zaydān clearly did not support the proposal to replace al-ʿarabīyah al-fuṣḥā with the Arabic folk language (al-luġah al-ʿarabīyah al-ʿāmmīyah). In order to sustain this position he uses arguments that will seem quite familiar to the reader by now.

First of all, he argues

'which one of the folk languages (al-luġāt al-ʿāmmīyah) do they want to use? The language of Egypt (luġat miṣr)? Or the language of Syria (luġat al-ṣām)? Or the language of Irāq (luġat al-ʿirāq)? Or the language of Hijāz (luġat al-ḥijāz) or Yemen (al-yaman), or the Najd (māġi) or the Maghrib (al-maġrib)? Each of these countries has its specific language which the folk people of the other countries (ʿāmmat al-bilād al-ʿaḥrā) do not understand. If they say: 'Compose a language that
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is intermediate between these languages. We say that a language cannot be composed by [human] agreement, because it is a body that grows in a natural way, following the general law of development. Supposing that it is possible [to influence the development of languages], then it is easier to adhere to al-luḡah al-fuṣḥā, since it is the mother of our folk languages ('umm luḡātinā al-'āmmīyah) and it is easier to understand than a new language that is collected from the mouths of the [different] communities/nations. (Zaydān, 1902: 279)

Zaydān raises here the usual objections against the unification and standardization of the so-called folk languages, which I discussed already in detail in my analysis of the debate in Al-Muqṭaṭaf.

However, in the next paragraph Zaydān forwards some arguments, which did not occur in the first debate (1881-1882).

First of all, Zaydān pays attention to and refutes the option of the standardization of more than one folk language. As I have demonstrated, this option was not even mentioned in the 1881-1882 debate. Zaydān argues that this would cause the dissolution of the Arab world and the dispersion of the unity of the speakers of Arabic.

What is also very striking is that Zaydān stresses the importance of al-fuṣḥā for maintaining not only literary bonds, but also the religious bonds between the different parts of the Arab nation. He also stresses the importance of al-fuṣḥā for Muslims in their study of the Koran, Hadith and religious books.

"They [might] say that every one of those communities (kull 'ummah min hā'ulā) [has to] adopt its [own] language, so that the Syrian (al-sūri) writes in the folk language of Syria (luḡat 'āmmat al-šām) and the Egyptian (al-miṣrī) in the folk language of Egypt (luḡat 'āmmat miṣr), and so on. This is the opinion of those who want the dissolution of the Arab world (inḫilāl al-ʾālam al-ʾarabī) and the dispersion of the unity of the speakers of Arabic (tašší šaml an-nātiqin bi-al-ʾarabīyah). Because the distinction of each community/nation by the language of its common people (ʾiḫšāṣ kull 'ummah bi-luḡat 'āmmatiyā) breaks the literary and religious bonds (al-sīlah al-ʾadabiyyah wa al-dīnīyah) between this community/nation and the other communities/nations. Add to this that the Muslims among them cannot dispense from studying al-luḡah al-fuṣḥā in order to read the Koran and the Hadith and the other religious books. They are very well aware of the importance of studying this language about which mister Willmore and his friends claim that it is hard to learn and that it takes long years.

Al-luḡah al-fuṣḥā is the only custodian of the Arabic bond (al-rābitah al-ʾarabiyyah) between all the speakers of this language. The merit of its preservation goes to the Noble Koran (al-qurʾān al-κarīm). (Zaydān, 1902: 279)

\[13\] Double quotation marks original.
This should not surprise us since Zaydān had a keen interest for Islam and its history, a topic about which he wrote several books.

Reactions to Willmore in Al-Manār (1902)

In Al-Manār of 1902 at least two articles are devoted to Willmore’s proposal. Both were written by Raṣīd Riḍā, the editor of the periodical.

The first article, ‘Maṣrū‘ al-ta’līm bi-al-luğaḥ al-‘āmmīyah al-misrīyah’ (The plan of teaching in the Egyptian folk language) contains his personal reaction against the suggestion of replacing al-faṣḥāḥā by the Egyptian folk language.

The second article, ‘Al-‘arābdīyah al-fuṣḥā wa al-‘āmmīyah al-misrīyah – munāzarah’ (Al-fuṣḥā and the Egyptian ‘āmmīyah – debate) is a report, written by Riḍā, of a debate between Willmore and the members of a scientific and literary association in Cairo, who had invited him for a debate evening on his book. The report was published in Al-Manār of 9 February 1902.

Maṣrū‘ al-ta’līm bi-al-luğaḥ al-‘āmmīyah al-misrīyah

After a rather long metaphorical introduction, Riḍā turns to Willmore’s proposal, which he summarizes as the proposal ‘to replace the noble correct language with the ridiculous folk language’ (‘istibdāl al-luğaḥ al-‘āmmīyah al-saḥīḥah bi-al-luğaḥ al-saḥīḥah al-šarīfah) and ‘to make the Egyptian folk language (al-luğaḥ al-‘āmmīyah al-misrīyah) the general language of education instead of correct Arabic (al-luğaḥ al-saḥīḥah),’ by which he obviously means al-faṣḥāḥā (Riḍā, 1902: 828; 829).

He then refers to the fact that this was not the first proposal of its kind, but that before Willmore, Wilhelm Spitta made a similar proposal. This proposal was moreover translated into Arabic and spread to the Arabic newspapers.

Riḍā states that he already has reacted to Spitta’s proposal previously and that he did not confine himself to a refutation of it, but that he also referred to the shortcomings of the Arabs in the revitalization of the correct language (‘iḥyā‘ al-luğaḥ al-saḥīḥah). As such, he criticized the Arabs for not taking their responsibility toward the Arabic language, and for only blaming the Westerners, without taking initiatives to remedy the situation.

If Arabic, to which he refers also as ‘al-luğaḥ al-muqaddasah’ (the holy language) and ‘luğaḥ al-dīn wa al-millāh’ (the language of religion [Islam] and the religious [Islamic] community), is made into a strong language, then it cannot be affected by such proposals made by foreigners.

Support should be asked from the Islamic Al-‘Azhar University in Cairo and teachers should speak at all times correct Arabic with their pupils, and as a result correct Arabic will become widespread again.
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The fact that Riddā considers Arabic not only the bond between all Arabs, but rather between all Muslims and between Muslims and their religion is most obviously indicated by the linguistic labels he uses in order to refer to al-faṣīḥah.

Apart from ‘al-luḡah (al-ʿarabīyyah) al-ṣaḥīḥah’ (the correct (Arabic) language), which he uses the most, he also refers to al-faṣīḥah as ‘luḡat al-qur’ān’ (the language of the Koran), ‘luḡatunā al-muqaddasah’ (our holy language) and ‘luḡat al-dīn wa al-millah’ (the language of religion [Islam] and the religious [Islamic] community). The implications and the connotations of referring to al-faṣīḥah as the correct language were already discussed in Chapter 4.

The use of ‘the language of the Koran’ indicates that al-faṣīḥah and the language in which the Koran was revealed is one and the same. This label is closely related to the other linguistic labels that Riddā uses, since the importance of al-faṣīḥah for most Muslims emanates from their belief that the Koran was explicitly revealed in Arabic. ‘Our holy language’ refers to the special position of al-faṣīḥah for the Muslims as the language of the Koran and the liturgical language of Islam. Also ‘the language of religion’ indicates the close relation between al-faṣīḥah and Islam as a religion, in the first place because the Koran was revealed in Arabic, but also because al-faṣīḥah is the liturgical language of Islam and the sciences that emanated from the interpretation of the Koran (such as, for instance, Islamic jurisprudence) were basically written down in this variety. ‘The language of the religious community’ refers then to the bond that is supposedly created between all members of the Islamic community if they all mastered Arabic.

Since all these labels have strong Islamic connotations, it is unlikely that a Christian would use them. For instance, none of these labels were used in the debate (1881-1882) in Al-Muqtataf, in which religion was hardly ever discussed. Even Zaydān did not use such terms.

Al-ʿarabīyyah al-fuṣḥā wa al-ʾāmmīyah al-misrīyah – munāẓarah

The next article is also written by Riddā, but it is a summary of a discussion between Willmore and ‘Abd al-ʿAzīz Ġawīs, one of the members of al-ʾammīyah al-ʿilmīyyah al-ʿadabiyyah (The Scientific Literary Society) who invited Willmore to a debate evening on his book.

It is obvious that Ġawīs tried to convince Willmore that he made a wrong assessment of the Egyptian, and in general Arabic, language situation.

One of his ways was to ask whether Willmore would accept his proposals if they were to be applied to the English language. Would Willmore, for instance,

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14 Ġawīs is said to have been a staunch defender of the idea of solidarity and political cooperation between Muslims, as he defended the unity of the Ottoman Empire (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 17, 27-28). In 1911 Ġawīs became the publicist of the Egyptian Al-bīdh al-watanī (The Nationalist Party) (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 7).
accept the replacement of the dialects of the English provinces (lahāqāt al-wildāyāt al-'inkīliṣyāh) with the dialect of London (lahāqat londan), so that the dialect of the capital would become the language of the whole kingdom?

Willmore had to admit that would be unacceptable to him, since each dialect contains a part of English history. Ġāwīs then replies that this is the same for Arabic in Egypt. The different Egyptian dialects are related to the history of the Arab tribes that settled in Egypt.

Ḡāwīs then argued that Willmore’s statement that the language of Egypt (luqat al-qurṣ al-misrī) is in fact a language independent (luqah mustaqliha) of correct Arabic (al-arabīyah al-sahīhah) was wrong. It is an Arabic language (variety) (luqah ‘arabīyah) into which some corruption and foreign words entered. Many words are at first sight considered not to be Arabic, but this is only because they deviate from ‘the fuṣḥā dialect of the Qurayš (lahqat al-qurayš al-fuṣḥā). Many of these words conform to the dialect of other Arab tribes, and as such Arabic.

Another argument employed by Ġāwīs is that in English there is a large difference between the way in which a word is pronounced and the way it is written and that, as such, even an educated person has to learn by heart how a word has to be written. He then asks strategically why the English do not correct this shortcoming.

Again Willmore has to admit that this would be a violation of the history of English and that a spelling reform would make a lot of the previously written books inaccessible.

Ḡāwīs then argues that the same argument applies to Arabic. Namely that it is impossible to replace the Arabic script, here referred to as ‘ḥaṣṣ luqatīnā’ (the script of our language), with that of another. In the same way it is impossible to replace the correct (al-sāliḥ) with the corrupt (al-fāṣid), by which he obviously means al-fāṣībah and al-‘āmmīyah, respectively. Moreover, the corrupt ‘āmmīyah is described as hard to reform since it changes every day.

Willmore is said to have accepted all these arguments. Ġāwīs is then reported to have concluded his speech as follows:

‘If we turn our backs on the al-luqah al-faṣībah and accept that education is in the Egyptian folk language (al-luqah al-āmmīyah al-misrīyah), in which there are no books and which has no grammar, we will pass to another stage of the difficulty of reform. It will be impossible to educate in this poor language (ḥādihi al-luqah al-faṣīrah). This is the stage which the Lord Macaulay has used as an excuse for the necessity of teaching the Indians in English.’ (Rīdā, 1902: 878)

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15 Willmore himself did not use the label ‘correct Arabic.’ This is the lexical choice of Ġāwīs during the discussion or that of Rīdā when he wrote down the article.
Here Ġawīš refers clearly to the colonial implications of the proposal to replace al-faṣīḥah with al-‘āmmīyah. He argues that it is possible that the use of al-‘āmmīyah is an intermediary step toward the replacement of Arabic with English.

He refers specifically to how Lord Macaulay dealt with the Indian situation. Macaulay had argued that the languages and dialects spoken in India were too diverse and that since most of them were not used as a written language, and as such no scientific books existed in them, the cost of providing education in these languages and dialects would be too high. As a result, he then introduced English as the only language of education.

Ḡawīš argues that the same might happen in Egypt. First of all, it is proposed to replace the existing written language with the spoken language. When this is done, the British colonial administration can argue that there are no scientific books in al-‘āmmīyah and that the costs for translation would be too high. They can then propose to use only English, and as a result both al-faṣīḥah and al-‘āmmīyah will be lost as languages of Egypt.

Even though at first sight this argument might seem a bit farfetched, it must be remembered that the British colonial administration was installed in Egypt in 1882 because of the enormous debts that Egypt had built up since the reign of Muhammad ‘Alī.

The British educational policy has been discussed by Tignor (1966). He argues that the British not only cut back drastically the educational budget, but that they also had a different educational philosophy than the previous Egyptian government. Tignor discusses Cromer’s Annual Report of 1902 (1) and states that it contained the following points concerning education.

First of all, elementary education had to be provided in the vernacular. Secondly, the Westernized government schools had to be improved so that civil service was to be ensured. Thirdly, enrollment in the government schools had to be restricted, and fourthly, technical education had to be stimulated (Tignor, 1966: 322).

These measures should also be interpreted in the light of the fact that

'Cromer and other British officials believed that the introduction of elaborate, literary Western-type education, as in India, would result in the creation of a Westernized political elite, a leadership for nationalist agitation that would be critical of British rule.' (Tignor, 1966: 320)

Moreover, from 1900 on, English started to become more important than French as a second language (since English became more important as an administrative language) and English also started to replace Arabic as a general language of instruction. This was combined with a general contempt for Arabic, and Arabic
was not considered a scientific language, since it was said to be imprecise and lacking the necessary vocabulary.

‘Neither was Arabic considered a language of science; it was felt to be imprecise and lacking in the necessary vocabulary. If Western science was to be taken up, it should be done in European languages, the British argued. An increasing number of non-linguistic courses were offered in either English or French, rather than Arabic.’ (Tignor, 1966: 326)

So, in the light of Cromer’s report and British language policy in Egypt, Willmore’s proposal is clearly more than a mere scientific discussion, and as such Ġāwiš’s argument is not completely unwarranted.

The report was concluded with a reference to the fact that Willmore was pleased with and convinced by Ġāwiš’s arguments, and that he hoped to be invited another time in order to discuss linguistic issues in more detail.

Riḍā concludes his article with the critical note that, even though the debate was very useful since Willmore was convinced, Arabic still needs to be further circulated and spread. Riḍā adds to this, ‘even if only among its speakers (ahluḥā).’ This implies that Riḍā actually hopes for a much wider circulation of Arabic, namely among all Muslims, even the non-Arabs among them.

Riḍā’s final conclusion is that

‘one of the benefits of this book is that it mobilized thinking in order to revive the language (al-ᵘqṣah) and some of the intellectuals think of composing a society for this. Hopefully they do this soon.’ (Riḍā, 1902: 879)

Willmore’s reaction (1905)

In the second edition of 1905, Willmore briefly discusses the Arab reactions to his book. It is obvious that he did not change his mind, contrary to what Ġāwiš and Riḍā claim.

‘A thousand and one columns have been published by a certain section of the native press amathematising my suggestion that for secular purposes there should be one language for speech and literature, and that the vernacular. The change proposed seems to me so desirable and necessary unless the benefits of education are to be for ever confined to the privileged twelve percent, that I am at loss to account for the opposition of the press. It would be interesting to know how far the opinion of the country is expressed in the articles which have appeared in the newspapers.’ (Willmore, 1905: xii-xiii)
He continues that many highly educated persons were in favor of his proposal. He then refers to the fact that similar proposals were already forwarded and discussed in *Al-Muqtataf* since 1881. Here Willmore of course refers to the debates we discussed above. He draws special attention to *Al-Mumkin*'s articles.

Willmore further argues that

\[\text{"It is not for a small number of persons who already possess a means of communicating their thoughts in writing to decide that the rest of the population shall have no means of so doing."} \ (\text{Willmore, 1905: xiii})\]

And he illustrates this with an example of periodicals that were written in the vernacular and that had a wide popularity.

He then summarizes the main objections against his proposal, which are mainly centered on religion, the need for one common written language in the Arab world, and the diversity of the folk languages.

Willmore argues that, first of all, the religious objection is mainly based on the false assumption that ‘the literary language of the day’ (e.g. 1902) is identical to the language of the Koran. However, even though the grammar is quite similar, on the level of vocabulary and phraseology there are large differences between both varieties. Moreover, secondly, the community of Muslims stretches over countries of which the inhabitants do not speak or write Arabic. Thirdly, it would be to the advantage of Islamic education if a large percentage of the population is able ‘to read and write in some form of Arabic’ rather than only a small elite. (Willmore, 1905: xiii-xiv)

As for the communication problems that would arise when, for instance, a Syrian would write a letter in Syrian Arabic to an Egyptian, Willmore argues that these problems already do exist. (Willmore, 1905: xiv)

As concerns the suggestion that educated people should accustom themselves to speaking the written language at all times, and thereby, convince the common people to do the same, Willmore states that the spoken habits are so deeply rooted that they cannot be erased by ‘stigmatising it in a newspaper article.’ (Willmore, 1905: xiv)

On the question of yet another correspondent, namely, which of the Egyptian dialects should be used, Willmore answers that basically the dialect of the capital, Cairo, will be used, but that in general the differences between the Egyptian dialects are not at all that large.

\[\text{"Naturally, most of the literature, and certainly official documents, would be composed in the dialect of the capital. But the difference between it and the other Egyptian dialects consists mainly in pronunciation, and would practically disappear in writing."} \ (\text{Willmore, 1905: xv})\]
Moreover, local newspapers and literature can easily be written in more local dialects, as happens in Germany, Italy and Switzerland. The fact that languages change cannot be avoided, moreover language should adapt itself to the general progress of the world.

'As to the rules of the grammar, these are not made by governments but by the nations themselves, and they exist for spoken languages as well as for written.' (Willmore, 1905: xv)

Willmore also rejects the comparison between the Arabic linguistic situation and the spelling difficulties in English, which would indicate that there are separate spoken and written languages in English:

'Certainly the study of English would from one point of view be facilitated if it were written phonetically; but it is not necessary to point out that this had nothing to do with the question under consideration.' (Willmore, 1905: xv)

As regards the accessibility of the works of the ancestors (the literary heritage), Willmore argues that it is more accurately studied in Western universities than in the Arab world itself.

In conclusion, Willmore states that he has good hopes that things are starting to move in the right direction, 'but it needs to be encouraged by the influential and patriotic among the native population.' (Willmore, 1905: xv-xvi)

Ṣarrāf’s reaction (1905)

In Al-Muqataṣaf of February 1905 Ṣarrāf mentioned that Judge Willmore decided to reprint his book and that in the introduction of this second edition he discussed the Arab reactions to his book.

Ṣarrāf also mentioned that Willmore had written him a letter in English, of which he presents the translation in the article. After presenting the Arabic translation of the letter, Ṣarrāf added a short reaction.

Since Willmore repeats many of the arguments which were already mentioned in the introduction of the second edition, I will here summarize only the arguments which he addressed specifically to Ṣarrāf.

First of all, Willmore expresses his doubt about the possibility to make the ‘āmmmah speak the written language. History demonstrates that the opposite always took place, namely that the folk languages replaced the written languages. If the opposite happens, it cannot be called progress, but regression.

The progress of the European communities/nations would not have taken place if they had not started to use their specific languages (lugātuhum al-ḥāṣṣah). Good books are those books that can be easily understood, and Willmore quotes
Blaise Pascal in order to sustain his argument, blaming the Arabs that they believe
just the opposite, namely that good writing is characterized by the fact that only a
few readers understand it. Because of this, science and knowledge cannot be
spread, as it seems impossible to Willmore that romantic correspondence can be
conducted in such a language. The work of judges is further complicated because they
have no exact representations of what witnesses say, but only translations into
the written language of testimonies.

Since al-‘arabīyah al-fuṣḥā became neglected, it would better be studied at
the university, as a dead language, together with the other Semitic languages.

Willmore also dismisses the use of an intermediate variety between al-
‘āmmīyah and the inflected language. Moreover, the linguistic extremism of the
Arabs might be the cause of the complete loss of Arabic, both the spoken and the
written language being replaced by English or French.

He specifically disagrees with Šarrāf’s argument that the proposal to use
the spoken language as a written language too came too late.

The translation of Willmore’s arguments is followed by a reaction by Šarrāf.
Šarrāf repeats many of the arguments he forwarded in his reaction to Willmore’s
book in 1902. He states that it is too late now to replace the currently written
language with the spoken language, because the reading public already became
used to reading newspapers and books in this language. He also repeats his
argument that some ‘āmmīyah words, especially those words which have no
current equivalent in al-faṣīḥah, should be allowed in the writing language, as well as
good ‘āmmīyah expressions and metaphors. Concerning the use of foreign loans
an intermediate position should be taken as well. This means for Šarrāf that the use of
foreign loans (in an arabicized form) should be allowed, so that Arabic can keep
pace with European languages.

Šarrāf then turns to Willmore’s argument that in the first debate (1881-
1882) Šarrāf himself had compared the difference between the spoken and written
Arabic to the difference between Italian and Latin. Šarrāf states that this was
indeed the case, but before the revival (nahḍah) that was initiated by Muḥammad
‘Alī. He repeats that at that moment Muḥammad ‘Alī could have easily chosen to
use the spoken language in Egypt and Syria (al-luğah al-mahkīyah fī miṣr wa al-
šām) as a writing language. But he did prefer to use al-fuṣḥā. As a result the spoken
and the written language gradually started to resemble one another, in the same
way spoken and written Italian did.

Moreover, despite the fact that most newspapers are written in al-faṣīḥah
(here referred to as al-luğah al-muʿrābah), they are widely read, readers spending a
lot of money to purchase them. So, together with the further development of
education, so that the reading public increases, the influence of the newspapers will
further increase, and as such the language use of the people can be further rectified
(taqwīm līsānīhim) and 'they will start to speak and write a language that is near to the language of [the newspapers]' (Ṣarrūf, 1905: 150).

Concerning the difficulty of the Arabic script, namely the fact that only consonants and not the vowels are written, Ṣarrūf argues again that experienced readers who master their language do not read all the letters of a word, but rather read the global picture of the word. This global word picture conforms to the mental word picture in the mind of the reader. As such, he suggests that the fact that the vowels are not written does not hinder reading. Moreover, Ṣarrūf argues, this is corroborated by twelve centuries of experience, namely that Arab readers have been reading Arabic in such a way without problems. Ṣarrūf adds that if this experimental proof is not considered a scientific proof, then scientific proof does not exist.

Finally, Ṣarrūf repeats his main argument that in principle there is no objection against using the spoken language as a written standard language, and that readers would probably even be more enthusiastic about it. But Arab writers who are interested in writing in al-‘ammīyah are a small minority, while the great majority of writers, who are spread all over the Arab world,16 and even beyond,17 prefer to write in the inflected language (al-luqāh al-mu‘rabah).

Ṣarrūf concludes pragmatically that the use of a language variety cannot be imposed or applied if it is not supported by a large enough number of language users. So, al-‘ammīyah cannot be used as a written language, if this is not supported by the Arabic language users.

The Arab reactions against Wilmore's proposals and Cromer's language policy seem to have had some results. Tignor argues

'As part of an effort to conciliate nationalist feeling Cromer and his successors set out to reverse the British stance on the use of English. Arabic instruction was gradually reintroduced into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools. In the primary schools all courses were taught in Arabic. An increasing numbers number of subjects in the secondary schools were taught in Arabic, as trained Egyptian teachers became available. The secondary certificate examinations could now be taken in Arabic or a foreign language. Nevertheless, these curriculum changes did not go nearly as far as the nationalist critics desired. The latter still felt that the

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16 Ṣarrūf refers here concretely to 'Syria, Iraq, Transjordan, Algeria, and the countries of the Arabs,' (the latter probably refers to the Arabian Peninsula) (Ṣarrūf, 1905: 151).

17 Ṣarrūf gives the concrete examples of India and Bukhara (Ṣarrūf, 1905: 151).
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The curriculum was too Western-oriented: they called for "a more comprehensive of Mahommedan history, as well as Egyptian general history."18 (Tignor, 1966: 327)

Iskandar Maʿlūf (1902)
I want to conclude my discussion of what we might call the Willmore-debate by presenting an article that was written by Iskandar Maʿlūf, 19 not so much as a reaction against Willmore's book, but rather against Zaydān's reaction to the book (see above). The article is actually a letter addressed to 'the respected founder of Al-Hilāl' (Maʿlūf, 1902: 373). Despite its critique on Zaydān's opinions, the article was published in Al-Hilāl of 1902.20

Maʿlūf's article is interesting because it clearly demonstrates that with the suggestion to use the spoken Arabic of Egypt as a written language in Egypt, the idea of creating one new written language based on the spoken language(s) for all the Arabs, did not disappear.21

Maʿlūf opens his letter by introducing the question of the regulation and unification of the folk language (daḥṭ 'uṣūl al-luġah al-ʿāmmīyah wa ǧamʿ Ǧamlīḥā) and its use as a written language as a question that is directly related to success (naḡākh) and civilization (tamaddun al-bilād wa 'umrānīhā) (Maʿlūf, 1902: 373). The question had occupied him for a long time and when he finally reached his conclusions, he read Zaydān's article. And it took him completely by surprise.

Maʿlūf states that in the same way as English, al-luġah al-ʿarabiyyah al-fuṣḥā is only used for limited purposes, namely for writing and science. In the same way as English, al-fuṣḥā would not be used for speaking. As such, he indirectly says that al-fuṣḥā can be considered a foreign language.

Nevertheless, he argues, it is not hard for a human being to learn the written language at school, on condition that it is an easy language. (He quotes the example of children who speak French dialects that differ enormously from French, but who nevertheless when they go to school learn French easily. When they go home, they continue speaking their dialect with their uneducated parents and

18 The phrase between double quotation marks is quoted by Tignor from the Annual Report for 1906, written by Lord Cromer (Tignor, 1966: 327f.).

19 See also (Diem, 1974: 139).

20 In an endnote to the article, Zaydān very soberly noted that he published the letter in order to present 'the opinion of an Oriental writer (kātib ʿarabi) that is different from the opinions of the other Orientals' (Zaydān, 1902: 377).

21 Diem states that Maʿlūf defended Willmore's proposal (Diem, 1974: 139). However, this is not completely correct, since it is clear that Maʿlūf has one common language in mind, while Willmore clearly has Egyptian Arabic for the Egyptians in mind.
relatives, but eventually the language of conversation of these children will be French.) This is the case for all languages, but not for 
_al-fushā_, because it is too difficult a language.

_Ma'lūf_ then argues that any of the spoken languages, 'whether it is the language of Syria, Egypt, Iraq, or Yemen (lage al-ṣām 'am misr 'am al-'irāq 'am al-yaman), as long as it has easy grammatical rules' is easier to learn than 
_al-fushā_ (Ma'lūf, 1902: 374).

Even though he does not formulate it as such, _Ma'lūf_ obviously suggests here that these spoken languages are not only easy to learn for their native speakers, but for the speakers of other varieties as well. This implies then that he does not suggest that 'the language of Syria' is to be used in Syria alone, or 'the language of Iraq' only in Iraq, and so on, but rather that one of these varieties should be used as a basis for all the Arab countries.

This interpretation is confirmed as _Ma'lūf_ further develops his argumentation. _Ma'lūf_ states that the end result of clearing out the differences between these languages (varieties), by choosing the most adequate form and abandoning all the others, will be an 'intermediate mixture of all these languages' (mazīg mutawassat ba'yīn ḥādihi al-luqāt ẓamā'ihā) (Ma'lūf, 1902: 374).

This (new) writing language (lage al-kitāb) will also become a language of speech (lage al-takallum), in the same way as French and English. As such, 'our language (luqātumā) will become like one of the civilized languages ('iḥdā al-luqāt al-muta'madinah)' (Ma'lūf, 1902: 374).

Such a unification process is easy in _Ma'lūf_’s opinion, because the differences between these languages are mainly in vocabulary and not in the way of expression (ṭarīqat al-ta'bir).

The Egyptian language (lage al-luqāh al-misriyā) can easily be used as a basis, since the Syrians can understand it more easily than 
_al-fushā_. The same is the case for the Egyptians, who can understand the Syrian language (lage al-luqāh al-samīyyah) more easily than 
_al-fushā_. 'So what if it is a language intermediate between all [languages], with easy grammatical rules that can be laid down and applied within a very short time?' (Ma'lūf, 1902: 374).

_Ma'lūf_ quotes the by now well-known Darwinian argument that 'languages do not stop [evolving] at a certain limit, but grow in a natural way, following the laws of progressive evolution' (Ma'lūf, 1902: 374-375).

Thus, the already existing difference between these spoken languages, and between each of them and the original language (lage al-luqāh al-'esliyyah) can only grow larger. The folk languages (which are now still very similar) will gradually differ more from each other, as they will differ more from 
_al-fushā_, if they are not regulated.

'If the nation (al-qawm) does not take steps to prevent this case, then there will remain no means to collect their scattered pieces, apart from a language which they
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call al-‘uqūh al-fiṣḥā. This would be a real confusion of tongues (tabalbul). By conserving a language we would lose the bond between the peoples.’ (Ma‘lūf, 1902: 375)

In Ma‘lūf’s opinion, the devotion of the Arab Muslims22 to al-fiṣḥā must not be exaggerated, since non-Arab Muslims speak other languages than Arabic, such as for example Turkish and Hindi. Those who want to learn al-fiṣḥā for religious purposes, such as the reading of the Koran, can still learn it.

However, Ma‘lūf does not accept the proposals for orthographic change, which he describes as ‘irrational’ (gayr ma‘qūf). The person who proposes such a thing is ‘really ignorant about our language,’ he agrees with Zaydān. There only has to be found a solution for the fact that vowels are not written down.

Ma‘lūf reports that Zaydān complained that both the Egyptian government and the foreigners neglect the Arabic (fiṣḥā) language. Ma‘lūf states that this is a good thing, since its negligence will only accelerate the application of the standardization of the folk language. It is an indication that people got bored with al-fiṣḥā because of its difficulty. Pupils will emerge who speak in the same way as they write. These pupils will be more successful than those people who speak a language that differs from the language they write. Eventually they will become so numerous that the newspapers cannot follow their example and change their language.

Then

‘this language will mount the steps of success and progress until it will be counted among the civilized languages, while al-fiṣḥā disappears, which is no more than a firm link with the ancient condition of ignorance.’ (Ma‘lūf, 1902: 376)

In the last four paragraphs Ma‘lūf repeats his main arguments: the difficulty of al-fiṣḥā and the fact that it impedes the general spread of progress and success, the argument that its replacement by the folk language seems hard at first sight, but is in fact not only possible (mumkin), but even easy; moreover, such a measure would be natural (tabīt).

The reader will notice that the general idea of Ma‘lūf’s proposal is the same as that of Al-Mumkin’s, namely the idea of one common language for all Arabs, but one based on the spoken languages and not on the written.

What may be new is that Ma‘lūf suggests that one spoken language, for instance Egyptian Arabic, can be used as a basis for the new common language, with some additions of the best characteristics of the other folk languages.

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22Ma‘lūf refers to them here as ‘‘īḥwānūn al-muslimūn’ (our brothers, the Muslims), since he is a Christian.
However, at the same time the Syrian language (al-luğah al-šāmīyah) too could be used as a basis.

Even though Maʿlūf argues that the evolution and change of languages is natural, it is nevertheless clear that at the same time he thinks that linguistic change and variability somehow has to be contained by regulation. In this sense, his basic attitude toward linguistic variability does not differ essentially from that of the defenders of the written language.

In the same way as the defenders sometimes try to downplay the difference between the spoken languages and the written language, Maʿlūf tries to downplay the mutual difference between the folk languages themselves. However, in the same way as the defenders of al-faṣīḥah had to admit variability within al-faṣīḥah, and between al-faṣīḥah and the folk languages (in 1881-1882), Maʿlūf also admits that there are differences between the spoken languages and that these differences can only grow if they are not regulated.

Linguistic labeling and categorization in the Willmore-debate
In Chapter 4, I presented an analysis of the use of linguistic labels in the sub-debate 1881-1882. I tried to demonstrate that labeling is more than ascribing labels to pre-existing linguistic categories, but that it also intrinsically involves categorization of linguistic variability.

As the reader will have noticed, many of the labels, which I discussed in detail in Chapter 4, continue to be frequently used. In this section I will present an analysis of the use of linguistic labels paying attention to elements of continuity as well as the use of new labels.

References to al-faṣīḥah
The labels luğat al-kitābah (the writing language) and ‘al-luğah al-maktūbah (the written language) continue to be frequently used, as well as ‘al-luğah al-faṣīḥah’ or ‘al-‘arabiyah al-faṣīḥah, the adjective ‘faṣīḥah’, however, being gradually outdone by its superlative ‘fuṣḥā. The general label ‘al-‘arabiyah’ (Arabic) in order to refer to al-faṣīḥah continues to be regularly used too. Also the tendency to use the label ‘al-luğah al-šāmīyah’ (the correct language) in order to refer to al-faṣīḥah is further confirmed. In Ṣiddīq’s articles it is the most frequently used label.

What is new, for instance, is the use of the label ‘al-luğah al-muʿrābah’ (the inflected language or the language with inflection endings) in order to refer to al-faṣāḥah. This label was not used in the previous sub-debate (1881-1882), but it is frequently used in this one.

The use of such a label somehow stresses the fact that al-faṣīḥah is characterized by inflection (‘i’rāb) and that al-‘āmmīyah is not. The discussion as to whether inflection (‘i’rāb) is essential for meaning construction has received a
lot of attention in the Arabic linguistic literature, of which the implications need to be further researched.

Other references to al-faṣīḥah: lexical preferences of Muslims

What is interesting in the Willmore-debate is that Muslims and Christians participated in it and that as a result it is possible to compare their linguistic preferences.

Here it suffices here to refer to Rida's references to al-faṣīḥah as 'luğat ad-dīn' (the language of religion), 'luğat al-millah' (the language of the religious community), 'luğat al-qrān' (the language of the Koran) and 'al-luğah al-muqaddasah' (the holy language). Even though, strictly speaking, 'dīn' and 'millah' can be used to refer to Islam, Christianity and Judaism, and respectively the Muslims, Christian and Jewish communities, which had the official status of millah in the Ottoman Empire, it is obvious that Rida refers specifically to Islam and the community of Muslims.

Rida was a Muslim, who clearly identified himself as a Muslim, in a predominantly Muslim society. Even though Christians can recognize and stress the importance of al-faṣīḥah for Muslims as the language of the Koran and as a liturgical language, as for instance Gurghi Zaydan does, it seems unlikely that they will refer to it as 'al-luğah al-muqaddasah' (the holy language).

References to al-ʿāmmīyah

New labels that are used in addition to 'luğat al-takallum' (the speaking language) and 'al-luğah al-ʿāmmīyah' (the folk language), are among others 'al-luğah al-maḥkīyah' (the spoken language), which becomes the most commonly used label. Since the debate is mainly about the use of Egyptian Arabic as a written language in Egypt, the adjective 'miṣrī' (Egyptian) is often used for further qualification of the linguistic label.

So we often encounter references such 'al-luğah al-maḥkīyah fi miṣr' (the spoken language of Egypt), which is also the title of Wilmore's book, 'al-luğah al-ʿāmmīyah al-miṣrīyah' (the Egyptian folk language) and 'al-ʿarabīyah al-miṣrīyah' (Egyptian Arabic).

Another tendency seems to be the increasing use of 'lahgah' in the sense of dialect/variety in order to refer to more locally used linguistic varieties. Examples are 'lahgah al-ʿāsimah' (the dialect of the capital), 'lahgah landan' (the dialect of London), 'lahgah sā'ir al-wilāyah al-inkīlahīyah' (the dialects of the other English provinces), 'lahgah al-qāhirah' (the dialect of Cairo) and 'lahgah al-quraysh' (the dialect of the Quraysh) (Rida, 1902: 877).

This might indicate a tendency toward the use of 'lahgah' for smaller, not officially recognized language varieties and that of 'luğah' for language as a
collective label, as well as the officially recognized language variety. However, further research is warranted here.

Geographical references
In conclusion of this section it is worth mentioning that since the debate was moved westwards, from Syria to Egypt, the previously general labels ‘al-maqrīb’ (the Maghrib) ‘al-maqrībīyūn’ (the Maghrarians) are now often replaced by more specific labels as ‘ahl tūnis’ (the people of Tunisia) and ‘ahl al-ḡazā’ir’ (the people of Algeria). This might be related to a better awareness of the Syrian participants concerning the administrative units of the western part of the Ottoman Empire. It might also indicate the further consolidation of such administrative divisions by the French colonization.
MUHAMMAD KURD ‘ALİ AND AL-MUQTABAS

Before turning to yet another important phase in the debate, I want to refer to the linguistic articles of Muḥammad Kurd ‘Alî (1876-1953) in Al-Muqtabas (1906-1914).

Muḥammad Kurd ‘Alî

Muḥammad Kurd ‘Alî was born in Damascus. He received his education at an Ottoman ruḍṭīyah school in Damascus, where he learned Turkish and French. He also studied two years at a Lazarist school in Damascus (Seikaly, 1982: 129).

However, Seikaly argues that his intellectual formation was also strongly influenced by his contacts with several religious scholars in Damascus, (such as Tâhir Al-Ǧazā’irî) and his further close reading of French authors such as Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Taine, Renan, Saint Simon, Hanotaux and Le Bon (Seikaly, 1982: 129-130).

Between 1901 and 1908 he spent most of his time in Cairo, where he had his first experiences in journalism and where he started to publish his own periodical Al-Muqtabas. However, he continued to work for several other journals, among them Al-Mu‘ayyad. In 1908 or 1909* Kurdish ‘Alî returned to Damascus where he continued to publish Al-Muqtabas.

Kurd ‘Alî was strongly influenced by Muḥammad ‘Abduh’s and Rašīd Riḍâ’s ideas concerning Islam and modernity, in the sense that he was convinced that there was no contradiction between ‘real Islam’ and scientific and rational thinking. However, in contrast to Riḍâ, he divided knowledge into two separate domains, secular and religious, the latter being more narrow and confined than the first (Seikaly, 1982: 133-134).

Kurd ‘Alî also strongly believed that it was possible to make a synthesis between Western and Arab culture, arguing that cultural exchange has existed throughout human history. Moreover, since the West had borrowed heavily from Arabo-Islamic culture during the Middle Ages, adopting Western knowledge meant an indirect return to Arabic culture (Seikaly, 1982: 137).

Muḥammad Kurd ‘Alî and language

In his articles on the Arabic language Kurd ‘Alî’s focuses mainly on the social, religious and political aspects of language. In several articles he paid a lot of attention to the historical development of Arabic, its rise and decline, as well as the

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*Seikaly mentions 1909 (Seikaly, 1982: 127).
general linguistic situation in those countries where Arabic is spoken, relating it to the educational and the general political situation.

For Kurd ’Alt, Arabic is not only the language of the Arabs, but that of the Muslims as well. This is exemplified by the fact that when he discusses the general situation of Arabic in several countries, he refers to both regions where Arabic is the majority language, such as Syria, Iraq, Nağd, Hijaz, Tunisia, Algeria, and so on, as well as regions where non-Arab Muslims live, such as Zanzibar, Java, Afghanistan, Bukhara and Turkey (Kurd ’Alt, 1906: 430-435).

He also argued, for instance, that during the first centuries of Islam, all Islamic governments used Arabic as an administrative language, whether they were Arabs or not. Only in later centuries, such governments started to use other languages (Kurd ’Alt, 1906: 430-435). Even though Kurd ’Alt does not mention it explicitly, it is clear that he refers to the Ottoman government, which used Turkish as its language of administration.

Refuting the opinion of some that Arabic is not suitable to be used as a scientific language, he argues that this is not an intrinsic characteristic of Arabic, but that it is related to the detrimental educational situation and the language policies of the missionary schools (in Syria) and the British government (in Egypt). It is impossible to develop a language into a scientific medium if it is not used in education.

Again he uses historical arguments in order to sustain his position. As such, he refers to two important historical periods during which Arabic underwent serious developments. The first period was the Abbaside period, when many important scientific works were translated mainly from Greek into Arabic (often via Syriac). The second period was that during Muḥammad ’Alt’s reign, who stimulated education in Arabic and the translation of European scientific works into Arabic (Kurd ’Alt, 1907: 311-314).

In his articles, Kurd ’Alt both rebukes and praises Western instances, for their detrimental language policies and for their participation in the revitalization of Arabic, respectively. He refers for instance to the fact that the SPC made English the only language of education, and to the British language policy in Egypt, which was also focused on the use of English as the sole language of instruction (Kurd ’Alt, 1907a).

On the other hand, he praises the efforts of many Western scholars in conserving, editing and translating Arabic manuscripts, arguing that they often are more interested in Arabic than many speakers of Arabic themselves (Kurd ’Alt, 1906). He also praises the role of the missionary schools in the revitalization of Arabic in Syria (Kurd ’Alt, 1909b: 502-514).

After 1909, he also paid attention to the specific roles of Turkish and Arabic in the Ottoman Empire, mainly rebuking the Ottomans for their limited interest in the Arabic language (Kurd ’Alt, 1909a: 109-112).
Further developments in the fuṣḥā-‘āmmīyah debate

Al-‘āmmīyah and al-fuṣḥā in Al-Muqtabas

Two articles appeared in Al-Muqtabas in which specific attention was paid to the relation between al-‘āmmīyah and al-fuṣḥā. The aim of both articles, one written by Nā‘ūm Makarzal (1863-1932) and the other by ‘Abd Al-Qādir Al-Maġribī (1867-1956), is how ‘āmmīyah words can be ‘elevated’ to the level of fuṣḥā.

The main difference between these articles and previously published articles on the subject (‘āmmīyah versus fuṣḥā) is that they are not so much theoretical discussions, but that they contain many concrete examples of ‘āmmīyah words and their equivalents in fuṣḥā (Makarzal, 1910: 643-657, Al-Maġribī, 1910: 783-789).

The elevation of ‘āmmīyah to the level of fuṣḥā is a subject that already received some attention from Al-Yāziği and The Damascene Literary Society in the debate of 1881-1882. They both referred to initiatives of collecting dictionaries of ‘āmmīyah words and their equivalents, in order to facilitate the acquisition of al-fuṣḥā by the ‘āmmah.

Such attempts occurred also later on in the periodicals of the Arabic Language Academies. Many articles (and dictionaries) have been published, containing lists of ‘āmmīyah words that, providing some small modifications, can be considered fuṣḥā.

It deserves to be mentioned here that Muhammad Kurd ‘Alī was the founder of the Arabic Language Academy in Damascus in 1919. Also ‘Abd Al-Qādir Al-Maġribī was an active member of the academy for several years.

Other linguistic articles in Al-Muqtabas

Also Tāḥā Ḥusayn submitted two articles to Al-Muqtabas on the history of the Arabic language (Ḥusayn, 1912: 20-29; 93-111). In these articles, with the title, ‘Hal tastarid al- lugah maḏdah al-qādim?’ (Can the language regain its previous glory?), Ḥusayn discusses the several stages of the development of the Arabic language, from its earliest stage until its recent revival in the nineteenth century.
THE FUSHÄ-'ÂMMIYAH DEBATE AND EGYPTIAN NATIONALISM

The fushä-'âmmiyyah debate was given yet another dimension in Egypt when it became strongly interrelated with the construction of an Egyptian national identity during the 1920s and 1930s.

However, before discussing the proposals that were made during the twenties and thirties, in detail, I want to mention to the linguistic proposals of Ahmad Lutfi Al-Sayyid, who is considered to be the intellectual father of Egyptian nationalism.

Ahmad Lutfi Al-Sayyid and language

As early as 1913, Ahmad Lutfi Al-Sayyid had defended a secular form of Egyptian nationalism. He also stressed the need for the modernization of the Arabic language. This meant for him, among other things, lexical and stylistic borrowing from Western languages, as well as narrowing the gap between fushä and 'âmmiyyah. However, the basis for this new Egyptian language was to be al-fushä, with extensive loans from al-'âmmiyyah, but not the replacement of al-fushä with al-'âmmiyyah, as others suggested later on (Suleiman, 1996: 28-31; Wendell 1972: 276-279). (See also below.) All with all, Lutfi Al-Sayyid considered al-'âmmiyyah to be a defective language (lugah ṣaqīm) (Wendell, 1972: 277).

According to Suleiman (1996) borrowing from al-'âmmiyyah had a double function, namely that of modernization and authentication. On the one hand, the borrowings from al-'âmmiyyah would give a more Egyptian twist to al-fushä, and on the other hand, these borrowings could be used as a backdoor for importing assimilated foreign borrowings which have been excluded from the written language (Suleiman, 1996: 30). The end result Lutfi Al-Sayyid aimed at would then be 'a medium of expression that is at one and the same time less elevated than the fushä and more refined than the colloquial' (Suleiman, 1996: 30).

Egyptian nationalists and language

Lutfi Al-Sayyid expressed his ideas at a moment when most Egyptian intellectuals were still by and large focused on an Egyptian identity that was strongly connected to the Ottoman Empire. However, in the 1920s and 1930s Lutfi Al-Sayyid’s ideas inspired many younger Egyptian thinkers, which in the end gave him the name ‘ustâd al-ġayl’ (the mentor of the generation).

Whereas the decomposition of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of World War 1 and, as a result, the disappearance of Ottoman identity as a focus for national identity construction, led to the construction of Arab nationalism in Syria and Iraq, this was not the case in Egypt. After the revolution of 1919, which led to the nominal independence of Egypt in 1923, political, economic and intellectual
developments all pointed to a focus on Egyptian identity based on Egypt as a geographical and territorial unit.

At that time, and even already during World War I, both the Egyptian nationalists and the Arab nationalists in Greater Syria shared the feeling that Egypt was not really a part of the Arab world. Generally, this meant that the Egyptians did not perceive themselves as Arabs and were also not perceived as Arabs by the politicians of the Fertile Crescent. These broader political developments also led to specific developments in the views on language and literature in Egypt.

In their monograph on the development and evolutions of national identity in Egypt, Gershoni and Jankowski (1986) focused, apart from the political, economic and social developments that led to the construction of Egyptian nationalism, also on how Egyptian writers gradually develop specific Egyptian themes in literature. They had the conscious aim of creating an Egyptian literature.

At the same time, many Egyptian authors felt that the Arabic language was unfit to give expression to their specifically Egyptian characters and themes. This tendency was also strongly interrelated with a focus on realism in literature. Thus, many authors felt it unnatural to represent the speech of, for instance, an Egyptian peasant in al-fushā (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 217-221).

There seems to have been a wide consensus among Egyptian nationalists concerning the need for the Egyptianization of the Arabic language (tamṣīr al-luḡāh al-ʿarabiyyah), an idea which they picked up from Lutfi Al-Sayyid. However, the exact interpretations of what this meant in practice were divergent (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 217-221). (See also Suleiman (1996: 25-38)).

Gershoni and Jankowski (1986) state that there were in fact two different approaches, which they labeled ‘the reformist approach’ and ‘the radical approach.’ The first ‘picked up and refined earlier ideas of terminological and grammatical modernization,’ while the latter added to these notions the idea of ‘the augmentation and/or partial replacement of written literary Arabic with the spoken colloquial of Egypt’ (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 217).

Moderate reformist positions were for instance taken by Muhammad Husayn Haykal (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 218-220) and Tāhā Husayn (Suleiman, 1996: 33-36).

Muhammad Husayn Haykal, who was a disciple of Ahmad Lutfi Al-Sayyid and the editor of the Egyptian periodical Al-Siyāsah, which had been founded by Lutfi Al-Sayyid. Haykal stressed the need for the simplification and modernization of Arabic. The simplification of Arabic grammar could be achieved by discarding inflection. Modernization then meant for Haykal that foreign loans had to be accepted into Arabic, and not necessarily by finding Arabic equivalents for them. (It is not quite clear whether this means that foreign loans could be accepted as such, without casting them into an Arabic form.)
Haykal seems to have stressed the artistic freedom of the writer in his choice of the variety of Arabic: literary Arabic, Egyptian ‘āmmīyah or a combination of both.

Nevertheless, Gershoni and Jankowski (1986) argue that

'however, Haykal never seems to have proposed, in an unequivocal way, the substitution of the colloquial dialect for current literary Arabic as the means of literary expression in Egypt. Moreover, by the close of the 1920s he seems to have been convinced that the use of colloquial Egyptian Arabic could not solve the problems of contemporary literature in Egypt. Compared to the issues of style and spirit in prose and poetry which we have already discussed, he saw the matter of language as a secondary problem for Egyptian national literature. In sum, Haykal never became a real advocate of the Egyptianization of the Arabic language in Egypt, he placed his emphasis for solving the problems of Arabic on its modernization rather than its Egyptianization.' (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 219)

Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn too, even though a staunch defender of an Egyptian national identity that was closely related to a European Mediterranean identity and that was different from Arab and Islamic identities, did not defend the idea of replacing fushā with al-‘āmmīyah. His idea of an Egyptian language comes closer to fushā than to ‘āmmīyah. Again, this idea is based on the view of ‘āmmīyah as a corruption of fushā (Suleiman, 1996: 33-35).

The more radical camp, however, was convinced that fushā could not be the vehicle of a genuine Egyptian literature. In contrast, they argued, Egyptian ‘āmmīyah was the authentic language of all the Egyptians, the language of communication of all layers of Egyptian society. Egyptian ‘āmmīyah was not just a colloquial, but rather a refined language of its own (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 219).

One of the most explicit defenders of this idea was Salāmah Mūsā. Mūsā was at much pains to refute the notion of Egypt as a part of the Arab and Islamic worlds. His main arguments against the use of fushā are its incapacity to be adapted to modernity (and that therefore it is a dead language), its difficulty, and its relatedness to a literary and cultural heritage that is not Egyptian (but Arab). In short, as Suleiman summarizes Mūsā's views: 'an Egypt that is Egyptian must have its own Egyptian language, which is manifestly not the same as the fushā' (Suleiman, 1996: 32).

As the reader will notice, these ideas are in a way reminiscent of Willmore's proposal, only now the proposals came from Egyptians themselves. This led Sa‘īd (1964) to the conclusion that the proposal was not a genuine proposal but influenced by Western ideas (Sa‘īd, 1964) However, at this moment Egypt was no longer under direct British control.
These proponents of the general use of Egyptian ‘āmmiyah knew at the same time that they could not easily replace al-fushā with the Egyptian ‘āmmiyah at once, so in practice they defended the idea of gradually blending al-fushā with as much ‘āmmiyah as possible (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 219).

In contrast with the earlier proposals, this is the first time that they were actually, although in a limited way, put into practice. Many Egyptian authors in the 1920s and 1930s actually started experimenting with the use of Egyptian ‘āmmiyah, usually in the dialogues of their short stories, novels and theatre pieces. Poetry seems to have been less influenced by these proposals.

Famous examples are the short stories of Mahmūd Taymūr, Muḥammad Taymūr, Isā ‘Ubayd, the novels of Mahmūd Tāhir Lāsin, of the older generation, and the short stories of Yahyā Ḥaqqī, and Tawfīq Al-Ḥakīm, of the younger generation. In drama, the early work of Tawfīq Al-Ḥakīm is representative of the use of Egyptian ‘āmmiyah in the dialogues (Gershoni & Jankowski, 1986: 221-227).

Comparison with previous debates
This debate showed some similarities with aspects of the earlier debates as well as some specific differences.

The debate shares with the Willmore-debate the characteristic that only language use in Egypt is concerned and not so much the language use of all the speakers of Arabic. The idea of creating an Egyptian language for all the Egyptians not only means that speakers of other Arabic varieties are not concerned (they are entitled to their own varieties, one author claimed), but also that there is no focus on Islam.

The new Egyptian language, or at least Egyptianized Arabic, is a language for all Egyptians irrespective of their religion. The focus on Arabic (in its fushā variety) as a language related to Islam also disappeared.

On the other hand, the more moderate reform proposals of Luft Al-Sayyid and Tāhā Husayn come very close to Sarrāf’s last proposal (1902, 1905), namely that lexical items from āmmiyah should be incorporated into fushā.

Comparison with other forms of regional nationalism
In conclusion, I think it is interesting to put these Egyptian linguistic reform proposals in a broader perspective by referring briefly to another form of territorial nationalism that was developed in Syria.
Further developments in the fuṣḥā-ʿummīyah debate

The main proponent of Syrian territorial nationalism was ʿAntūn Saʿādah\(^{24}\) (1904-1949), the founder and the leader of the Syrian Social National Party (SSNP) in 1932. The Syrian nationalism of Saʿādah shared its anti-Arabism with both Egyptian and Lebanese nationalism.

However, with its focus on ‘Greater Syria,’ which was, according to the party, an area defined by natural borders, namely ‘the Taurus Mountains in the north, the Euphrates in the east, the Suez Canal in the south and the Mediterranean in the west,’\(^{25}\) (Yamak, 1966: 84) it challenged not only Arab nationalism, but Lebanese nationalism as well.

For our purposes here, however, the most important characteristic of the Syrian nationalism of the SSNP is that it never led to proposals for the ‘Syrianization’ of the Arabic language, which was, as we have seen above, the case in Egypt. The absence of language in Saʿādah’s nationalist theories can be explained by the fact that, according to Saʿādah, language, history and religion were not essential elements for the formation of a nation. He rather focuses on the influence of the physical environment (of Geographical Syria) and ethnic elements on the development of the national character (of the Syrians) or the (Syrian) nation.

As such, according to Saʿādah, the Syrian nation was developed by the ethnic unity which resulted from the ethnic intermixing of all the peoples that have lived in Syria throughout history and the influence they underwent from the physical environment (Yamak, 1966: 82-85). The disregard for language, history and religion in the Syrian nationalist doctrine of Saʿādah formed yet another challenge for Arab nationalism.

We can conclude that territorial forms of nationalism in the Arab world do not necessarily lead to proposals for linguistic change, as was the case in Egypt after World War I. Such nationalist movements can altogether disregard language as an element in the construction of national identity, stressing other elements instead, such as, for instance, geography and ethnic descent.

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\(^{24}\) ʿAntūn Saʿādah was born in Šawr (Lebanon) and educated at the American University in Beirut (the former SPC). He was executed in 1949.

\(^{25}\) In 1947, these ‘natural borders’ were expanded so that Iraq, a part of Iran and Cyprus were to be included in Syria (Yamak, 1966: 84).
ANIS FRAYHAH

At a time when the debate concerning the Egyptianization of the Arabic language in Egypt was getting past its culmination point, the idea of creating one new standard language, based on the common elements of the spoken languages was picked up and further developed by the Lebanese Anis Frayhah.

One of his first articles on the subject was published in Al-Muqtaṣaf in 1938, with the title ‘Al-‘āmmiyah wa al-fuṣḥā. Al-‘awd ‘ilā al-mawdah’ (‘Āmmiyah and fuṣḥā. Return to the subject). But Frayhah further developed his ideas in several books, which were published during the fifties and sixties.

The first and most important of these books was ‘Naḥwa ‘arabiyah muyassarah,’ (Toward a simplified Arabic), published in Beirut in 1955. After the congress of the Arabic Language Academy, held in Damascus in 1956, Frayhah declared that the Arab world was not yet ready for the linguistic reforms he proposed. After that, he focused mainly on how the teaching of Arabic grammar could be reformed and simplified.26

Al-‘āmmiyah wa al-fuṣḥā (1938)

In his article of 1938, Frayhah introduces his proposals by remarking that the subject of al-‘āmmiyah and al-fuṣḥā has received considerable attention in the past, and that he is sure that the subject continues to be important.

He then refers to a recent proposal concerning the reform of the Arabic script (‘īṣṭāh al-ḥatt al-‘arabī), the simplification of grammar (tushīl al-qawā‘id) and the preparation of schoolbooks (‘īdād kutub madrasiyah mufīda). However, in his opinion these linguistic problems are closely related to yet another problem, which is much deeper, namely ‘the presence of two different languages, a language for the home and the market and a language for the books’ (hiya muṣkilat wağūd luqatayn luqat al-bayt wa al-sāq wa luqat al-kutub) (Frayhah, 1938: 292). This problem needs to be closely studied.

If educational programs aspire to the replacement of al-‘āmmiyah with al-fuṣḥā (‘īlād al-fuṣḥā maḥall al-‘āmmiyah), then first of all the ancient teaching books have to be replaced with new books that are based on psychology and pedagogy. However, also fuṣḥā itself needs to be adapted.

It is important to refer here to the fact that Frayhah, before developing his proposal, formulates a few premises, which he deems necessary for linguistic research. First of all, Frayhah stresses the need for a secular approach to the Arabic language, saying that ‘we have to distance ourselves from the idea of its holiness.

26 See also (Diem, 1974: 141).
Further developments in the fuṣḥā-'āmmīyah debate

(qudṣyatuḥdā), meaning that it is a divine language (fuqat al-‘ālihah) (Frayhah, 1938: 293).

Secondly, the priority of spoken language over written language: the essence of language is the pronunciation (nātq), in other words the spoken language (al-luqāh al-mahkīyah): ‘The written word is not more than a dead skeleton into which pronunciation pours life’ (Frayhah, 1938: 293). In the West, he states, in order to further sustain his point, the study of language is completely based on the spoken language, whereas writing is seen as the mere representation of sounds (‘aswāl). There is no language in the world in which there is complete conformity between script and pronunciation. Moreover, not single words, but rather sentences should be considered to basic unit of language.

Frayhah also strongly refutes the claims of those he calls ‘reactionaries’ (ratfīyān), that linguistic reform proposals are part of a hidden agenda of the imperialists in order to break the bonds that unite the Arab East (al-kurq al-‘arabi), or even worse, that they are an attack against language and religion (luqāh wa din) (Frayhah, 1938: 294). He argues that, although it may contain some truth, the real motives of such proposals are much deeper and more general. One of these motives is the eternal natural law of following the way of the least resistance: a human being hates to think in a language and to speak in another. This not economical, neither in thinking nor speaking.

Frayhah then argues that there are two kinds of battles between languages. One is the battle between two completely independent languages (luqatān mustaqillatām al-‘istiqlāl), the other is the battle between the spoken folk language (al-‘āmmīyah al-makfīyah) and the literary written language (al-luqāh al-‘adābīyah).

While the first battle has political causes, the latter is a natural battle, which all civilized peoples have to face. While many of them solved these problems, the Arabs are still in confusion. France solved the problem already in the 13th century, Italy solved it with the coming of Dante, Germany with Luther’s Bible translation, England with the coming of Chaucer and Shakespeare, and in Greece blood was spilt in order to replace classical Greek with modern Greek, the language of life (Frayhah, 1938: 294).

Literary languages appear historically, Frayhah argues, when a genial writer creates a literary masterpiece in his own vernacular and because others start to imitate his language use. As such, his vernacular becomes the standard (miqyās) for the literary language in general.

In the case of Arabic, this literary standard was undoubtedly the Koran. The Koran was the basis for morphological, grammatical, rhetorical and stylistic norms. The main historical question remains, however, whether the language of the Koran represents the spoken language of that time or whether it was an elevated literary and poetic language.
Further developments in the fuṣḥā-‘ammīyah debate

Frayḥah admits that there is still no conclusive evidence concerning this question, despite studies on the currently spoken dialects in the Ḥiḡāz, Naḡd, Syria and Iraq, the study of the Koran and its variant readings and the study of pre-Islamic poetry. Nevertheless, Frayḥah is convinced that there existed some difference between the spoken language and the language of the Koran, which was an elevated diction.

All these remarks finally lead Frayḥah to his actual proposal for the simplification of Arabic.

Frayḥah strongly disapproves of the replacement of fuṣḥā with ‘āmmīyah. He argues the Arab East needs rapprochement and harmony, and ‘language is one of the bonds that relates us.’ Making the folk languages literary languages would mean that every country (qurṭr) would have its own specific language, since the dialects are numerous and various. Moreover, ‘āmmīyah lacks a literary heritage (turāṭ ‘adabī) (Frayḥah, 1938: 297).

However, he proposes an intermediate solution (turāṭ wasat), namely the use of the language of conversation used by the educated people (luğat al-tahāqiṣ ‘inda al-muta‘addabīn).

‘In the Arab countries (al-‘aqṭir al-‘arabiyyah) there is an intermediate language (luğat wasat), which is not ‘vulgar ṣāmiyyah’ (ṣāmiyyah mutaḥaddīlah) and not fuṣḥā with complete inflection (fuṣḥā tāmmat al-‘i‘rāb).’ (Frayḥah, 1938: 297)

It is the language that Egyptian, Lebanese and Iraqi intellectuals (mutaqqafūn), for instance, use when they communicate with each other. It is true that sometimes they use specific words that are not understood by speakers of other vernaculars, but this is also the case for speakers of other languages. It is not necessary that speakers of a language understand all its dialects as long as there is one general medium for communication: a general language (luğah ‘āmmah), the language of the educated (luğat al-muta‘addabīn).

All Arab countries have to collect their forces in the battle against illiteracy, by using an intermediate language, which is not ‘āmmīyah and not completely fuṣḥā. Concretely, this intermediate language is characterized by three important simplifications relative to fuṣḥā. These are the elimination of inflection (‘i‘rāb), the elimination of the dual (tağīyah) and the simplification of the numerals (al-‘a‘dād).

**Inflection (‘i‘rāb)**

Frayḥah discussed ‘i‘rāb in more detail, arguing that ‘i‘rāb is a characteristic that tends to disappear in most languages. The examples closest to Arabic are the other
Semitic languages, such as Hebrew, Babylonian and Aramean, all of which lost inflection during their later development. The spoken varieties of Arabic also lost inflection.

Unfortunately, the Arab reactionaries do not see this as a general linguistic trend, but as linguistic decadence caused by the mixing of the Arabs with non-Arabs. As such, they consider 'āmmīyah a decadent form of fushā.

Moreover, 'i'rāb is not essential in meaning construction, a few exceptional sentences notwithstanding. This was already attested by Ibn Haldān in the 14th century and the Andalusian poet Ibn Qazwān.

As such, the elimination of 'i'rāb from Arabic would mean a significant simplification of its grammar, without losing an essential and meaningful element of it (Frayhah, 1938: 295-296).

**The dual (ratnīyah)**

The same is true for the dual form (ratnīyah). All Semitic languages, and even some Aryan languages, originally had dual forms, but eventually these forms disappeared. Frayhah adds somewhat naively that the dual might be a residue from very ancient times when people did not know how to count further than the number two. The elimination of the dual form would entail a considerable reduction in the number of personal pronouns, namely from 14 to 10 (Frayhah, 1938: 298).

**The numbers (al-'a'dād)**

The complex rules that regulate the use of the numbers must be simplified. The rule that a feminine number is used with a masculine noun is simply contradictory in Frayhah's opinion. (Frayhah, 1938: 298)

In conclusion, Frayhah repeats his main argument that many of the linguistic problems in the Arab world are related to the presence of two languages (wāţad luqatayn). These problems might be solved by studying the possibility of using one language, namely the language of the educated in conversation (luqat al-tahātub 'inda al-muta'adabbīn).

**Toward a simplified Arabic (1955)**

The ideas introduced in the previous article are further developed in a book 'Nahwa 'arabīyah muyassarah' (Toward a simplified Arabic), published in Beirut in 1955.

After presenting a short introduction on the origins and development of al-'arabīyah al-fuṣā, Frayhah turns to the description of the 'linguistic problem' (al-muškilah al-luqawīyah). Here Frayhah uses a technical term that will be used very
often from then on. He describes the problem as the problem of every people that is 'muzdawaq al-luqah' (bilingual).\(^{27}\) Frayhah used the term here as a translation for the term bilingual, but in later usage, the term was usually used in the sense of 'diglossic.'

Frayhah further elaborates:

'we think, speak, sing, whisper our prayers, talk to our children, court, communicate, curse in a smooth and fluent spoken language (luqah makhfiyah salisah sayyidah), which does not hinder thought and does not demand any effort from us.' (Frayhah, 1955: 18)

But when we have to talk in an official context,

'as a teacher, preacher, lawyer, newscaster for the radio, or lecturer in the classroom, we have to put on another linguistic personality. We have to speak a language that is foreign to the language of life, with inflection, complex, with severe rules qua syntax and style.' (Frayhah, 1955: 18)

Since language is an important element of life, and since people do not only communicate, but also think by means of language, it is contradictory to speak in an official context

'a language from the bygone generations [...], a language that has stopped to evolve at a certain point in time and place when it was surrounded by a halo of sacredness.' (Frayhah, 1955: 19)

Because of this, the Arabophone serves his language instead of letting it serve him. However, many peoples have suffered from bilingualism/diglossia ('izdiwāq al-luqah), such as the Greeks, the Romans, and the Indians, but in 'the struggle between the language of life and the book language it was always the folk that won' (Frayhah, 1955: 19). This is because these diglossic/bilingual peoples (al-šu‘ab al-muzdawaqah al-lisān) acknowledged, first of all, that the language of life is the real correct standard language (luqat al-hayah hiyα al-luqah al-sahihah al-fusḥah). Therefore, they elevated their spoken dialect (lahgatuhum al-mahkfiyah) to the level of the official language (al-luqah al-rasmīyah).

\(^{27}\) Frayhah added this term ‘bilingual’ between brackets. Generally the Arabic term ‘'izdiwāqiyah' is translated as ‘diglossia’ and ‘muzdawaq al-luqah’ as ‘diglossic.’ Usually the terms 'punâyah' and 'tunāt' are used in order to refer to bilingualism and bilingual, respectively. However, some authors use ‘'izdiwāqiyah' in order to refer to bilingualism and ‘punâyah’ in order to refer diglossia. Probably Frayhah wants to stress that spoken and written Arabic are two different languages and not two different varieties of the same language.
Secondly, their problems were not so strongly intertwined with religion and literature, as in the case of Arabic. Thus, the Arabic linguistic situation is more complex than other language situations.

In Frayhah’s opinion, the problem of the Arabic language consists of four main issues:

1. The presence of two different languages: ‘āmmiyah and fushā
2. The confinement of fushā by strict rules
3. The Arabic script that contains no vowels
4. The incapacity of Arabic to keep pace with science

To this the problem of the teaching of Arabic according to the ancient methods is added. Frayhah then discusses these problems in more detail.

The next part of the book is a general introduction to language and linguistics. Frayhah first presents a general definition of language (Frayhah, 1955: 32-39) and he discusses the general development of language (Frayhah, 1955: 40-51). After turning to the relation between language, race and mentality (Frayhah, 1955: 52-57), Frayhah then discusses linguistics (‘ilm al-lugah), (Frayhah, 1955: 58-71) and its influence on the general thinking about language (Frayhah, 1955: 72-88).

Even though these introductory chapters are very important for a deeper understanding of Frayhah’s work and thinking about language,28 in which he grounds his opinions about the general Arabic language situation, and more specifically the relation between ‘āmmiyah and fushā, these chapters should not retain us further here.

It suffices for the present purposes to refer to some general notions. Note that, first of all, Frayhah is convinced that no language (variety) is better than another. All linguistic varieties have grammatical rules that can be investigated and compiled in a grammar. Whether a language variety becomes an officially recognized language or not depends not so much on linguistic factors, but rather on religious, military and social factors. These non-linguistic factors, which Frayhah calls ‘sultah ‘ulūd’ (a higher power), determine whether a variety remains a dialect or whether it becomes an official language.

In the case of fushā, Frayhah argues, mainly religious factors determined its development.

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28 I also want to note here that Frayhah mentions the sources on which he draws. Among them are the works of Jespersen (1922), Mueller (1864), Reuch (n.d.), Page (1930). Frayhah also attended a seminar(s) by Firth at the University of London.
Before presenting his own proposals to solve the Arabic linguistic problem, he briefly discusses previously presented solutions. For instance, some have proposed to simplify fuṣḥā, on the one hand, and to elevate ʿāmmīyah in the direction of fuṣḥā, on the other. However, when these people are asked how this should be achieved in practice, they have no answer.

Their main misconception, Frayḥah argues, is that they limit their discussion of language to lexicon and style: simplification means for them that strange and obsolete language use has to be avoided. Language, however, is in the first place structure (tarkīb). The main problem is then that the structure of Arabic did not change during 1500 years. Avoiding strange and obsolete language use will not solve this problem.

Frayḥah then suggests that there are four potential solutions:

1. to make fuṣḥā the language for conversation (gaʿl al-fuṣḥā luḥat al-tahāfūb)
2. to leave the situation as it is
3. to impose an existing dialect (fard laḥğah qaʾimah)
4. to construct a unified dialect (waḍʿ laḥğah muwahḥadah)
(Frayḥah, 1955: 170)

The first solution
The first solution, namely to make al-fuṣḥā the language of conversation, is defended by people who think that the language situation can be returned to its previous situation.

Frayḥah mentions Anṭūn Saʿādah, the founder of the Syrian National Social Party, who suggested that when we teach our children to speak fuṣḥā, they will only speak fuṣḥā so that they will master it naturally, without having to study it. Such ideas, Frayḥah argues, are based on the assumption that fuṣḥā was once a language for daily conversation, which then became corrupted because of the mixing of the Arabs with other peoples. These people think, then, that it is possible to return fuṣḥā to its original position.

However, even if he is convinced that fuṣḥā was undoubtedly the language of the elite, poetry and religion, Frayḥah doubts whether it has ever been a general conversational language (Frayḥah, 1955: 171-174). He seems to suggest here that if fuṣḥā was never a language for conversation, then it can never be made one.

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29 It is interesting to note that apparently Saʿādah seems to have focused at least at one point on the importance of the use of fuṣḥā, notwithstanding his general disregard for language as an essential element in nation construction. It would be interesting to investigate in which context Saʿādah defended the use of fuṣḥā for conversations. Unfortunately, Frayḥah does not mention the source.
The second solution
Frayhah does not discuss the second option, namely leaving the situation as it is, since he does not consider it a valuable one (Frayhah, 1955: 170).

The third solution
The third solution, namely imposing an already existing dialect, is in principle possible, as has been illustrated by the history of linguistics. A dialect (lahgah) can be elevated to the level of a literary language (marjaba al-lughah al-adabiyyah) by a higher non-linguistic force (sulta al-'ulya). This can be illustrated by many examples of contemporary literary languages, which were originally spoken dialects, such as Russian, French, German, Spanish and many other languages.

However, Frayhah does not see that at this moment (1955) there is an Arab country (halad 'arab) that can impose itself politically, militarily, or morally, on all the other Arab countries (gami' al-'aqdar al-'arabiyyah) and that can unite them (fa-yuqahhiduha) and impose its dialect (lahgatahuha) onto them (Frayhah, 1955: 175). There is also no literary or aristocratic social class in the Arab community with a specific dialect which it can try to impose and use for artistic and literary production. Even though the Egyptian dialect deserves a lot of admiration and is potentially suitable, it is not possible to impose it onto speakers of other Arabic vernaculars. (Frayhah remarks that it would be possible to do such a thing, if the Arabs were a people that submits itself to order (Frayhah, 1955: 174-175).)

Frayhah’s evaluation of the third solution is clear from the following:

‘Will the Lebanese be satisfied with his dialect? Will Bagdad recognize the superiority of the dialect of Cairo? Will the Damascene abandon his ‘ulnak sidi’ and replace it with ‘izzyak yd’ al’ah? (Frayhah, 1955: 175)

The fourth solution
The last solution is the construction of a unified dialect (ward laहgah muwaḥhadah).
Frayhah first dwells on the term ‘constructed language’ (lughah mawdah), which he defines as a newly created language that is imposed on the society. Such a language is by definition an artificial language, such as Esperanto and Volapük. The currently existing artificial languages, whether completely new, based on classical languages, or constructed by mixing or simplifying existing languages, are

30 Respectively Syrian and Egyptian ways of asking ‘How are you?’.
the result of a general international spirit. However, the problem with such languages is that the human factor is completely lacking, which is what gives language its beauty and magic (ɡamāl wa sthr). This is something that can only develop spontaneously. It cannot be constructed.

Frayhah argues, however, that his proposal to construct a unified spoken Arabic language (luğah ‘arabīyah maḥkīyah muwahhadah) does not mean that one language has to replace another. This is not his aim because

'we have a pure Arabic language, common between the Arab peoples, created by cultural, social and political factors during the last thirty years. It is the spoken Arabic language that is spoken by the educated Egyptian, Iraqi, Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian when they are gathered together. It is the spoken Arabic that you hear at the universities in Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad and Beirut. It is the language of the [literary] club. It is the language of the elevated Arab society that is created by the schools, the newspapers, the radio, tourism, political rapprochement and social solidarity.' (Frayhah, 1955: 181)

Frayhah then continues to describe this common spoken Arabic.

'This Arabic dialect common between the members of elevated society has no inflection, but rather it is ‘āmmīyah that is far from regionalism. It depends on fuṣḥā for all of its vocabulary, structures and expressions.' (Frayhah, 1955: 181)

While admitting that this is not correct inflected Arabic (‘arabīyah saḥīhah mu'rābah), he disagrees with the defenders of making fuṣḥā the language for conversation who claim that the language spoken by the educated is not ‘āmmīyah, but very near to fuṣḥā, so that if people stretch themselves a little, everybody will speak fuṣḥā within a generation.

Frayhah then devotes a chapter to the description of the characteristics of this common spoken Arabic dialect (ḥasāʾīs al-luḥāgh al-'arabīyah al-maḥkīyah al-muṣṭarakah) (Frayhah, 1955: 183-196).

These characteristics are
(1) the elimination of 'i'rāb
(2) a common norm
(3) its dependence on fuṣḥā as a source [language]

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31 It is interesting to note that Frayhah seems to focus mainly on the Middle East: Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Iraq.
The elimination of 'i'rāb is the main characteristic that differentiates the common spoken Arabic from fuṣḥā. There is no trace of 'i'rāb in it (Frayhah, 1955: 183-185).

The common norm of the common spoken Arabic is characterized by the elimination of 'i'rāb, the reduction of the number of personal pronouns from 14 to 8, which also entails a simplification of the conjugation of verbs, the disappearance of the distinction between masculine and feminine in the numerals, and common grammatical constructions (Frâyhah, 1955: 185-186).

The dependence of the common spoken language on al-fuṣḥā as a source language means that most of its vocabulary, expressions and style are adopted. In the same way as Latin remained the source language for the lexical expansion of European languages, fuṣḥā will be the source for the common spoken Arabic.

Frayhah concludes that

"the spoken Arabic dialect that he proposes is a literary language, which is the simplified and facilitated fuṣḥā Arabic, which was simplified and facilitated by life itself." (Frâyhah, 1955: 187)

The last but one chapter of the book is devoted to how this language can be made an official language. Frayhah enumerates four conditions that need to be fulfilled in order to achieve this:

(1) the language needs to have a literature
(2) it has to be written in Latin script
(3) its morphological, syntactic and phonological rules need to be determined
(4) the Arabs have to accept it

The first condition means that the language needs to be used for poetic, artistic, journalistic and scientific expression.

The second condition, the use of the Latin script, is a proposal that Frayhah did not mention in his article of 1938. According to him, it has the advantage that the pronunciation can be unified and that more vowels can be written down than is currently the case. Moreover, the pronunciation of loans from European languages can be more precisely represented.

Frayhah further stresses that, contrary to what most people think, 'āmmityah definitely has linguistic rules. Frayhah admits that the condition of canonizing the morphological, syntactic and phonological rules is somewhat paradoxical.

Note that in his first article (1938), Frayhah said that the number of personal pronouns would be reduced from 14 to 10. I do not know where this different assessment comes from.
On the one hand, language belongs to society, not to the individual. As such, it needs to be protected from the individual taste and exceptions. On the other hand, however, the canonization also means a restriction on the development of the language. Since grammatical rules are also needed for language education, it is necessary that these rules are formulated in a practical and not in a philosophical way.

The condition that the Arabs have to accept this new language is essential as well, since if they do not accept it, it will always remain a dialect. Their acceptance of the new language depends on their general consciousness of the linguistic problem, as well as the value and the beauty of the literature that will be written in this language.

Frayhah admits that his linguistic reform requires a strong will and determination, since

> 'the language is strongly related to religion and literature. Religion and literature form a strong spiritual bond. Most Arabs today feel that touching the language in any way will leave a direct trace on the national unity (al-rābitah al-qawmiyyah).'
> (Frayhah, 1955: 196)

In the last chapter Frayhah discusses what will happen to the ancient heritage. Frayhah’s answer is simple and straightforward: life will decide this.

> 'That which has a permanent value, will remain. That which is valuable for eternity will stay forever. That which contains thought or emotions will continue to live as long as there is thought and emotion.'³³ (Frayhah, 1955: 197)

However, the following year, Frayhah’s ideas were denounced by the Conference of Language Academies in Damascus in 1956, deciding that his ideas would not be applied (Diem, 1974: 141).

Aware of the importance of his fourth condition, namely that the Arabs have to be ready to accept and apply new linguistic norms in order to make his proposal feasible, then Frayhah begins to devote all his energy to the teaching methods of Arabic grammar.

In a footnote to a book that was published in 1966, ‘Fi al-lugah al-‘arabiyyah wa ba’d mašākiliha’ (Concerning Arabic and some of its problems), Frayhah says explicitly that he is not a proponent of clinging to the ancient, but that the Arabs currently do not accept any linguistic reform that touches the essential core of the language (Frayhah, 1970 (1966): 60 f.10).

³³ In Frayhah’s text this paragraph is underlined in order to stress its importance.
Comparison with previous proposals
As the reader will have noticed, Frayhah's proposal is the most elaborate and sophisticated one. In contrast to most of other the proposals I discussed, he does not only offer an abstract and theoretical discussion, but he also presents concrete examples of what he means. For instance, he discusses the characteristics of the common spoken Arabic language (al-luğah al-'arabīyah al-maḥkīyah al-muṣṭarakah) in detail.

Moreover, his proposal is grounded in a more general linguistic theory. He also draws comparisons between Arabic and other Semitic languages, such as Hebrew, Syriac and Akkadian.

Frayhah does not only pay attention to the practical linguistic aspects, but also to important extra-linguistic elements influencing the development of languages, such as religion, political and social circumstances.

This should to surprise us, since Frayhah was a professional linguist. Born in 1902 in Ra's Al-Man (Lebanon), he studied at the American University of Beirut, the former SPC. He also studied in Germany and obtained a Ph.D. in Semitic Studies from the University of Chicago. He taught at the University of Frankfurt and the University of California.

It would not be fair to compare our journalists of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, with the work of a widely read professor in linguistics and Semitic studies during the 1950s. Nevertheless, I think it is interesting to draw some parallels in terms of content.

In a way, Frayhah's proposal is basically the same as the one offered by Al-Mumkin in the 1880s. We can even see it as a further elaboration of Al-Mumkin's proposal. Both Al-Mumkin and Frayhah focused on the necessity of a secular view on language, even though Al-Mumkin remained largely implicit on the issue of secularization.

In the same way as Al-Mumkin, but again in a much more elaborate and sustained way, Frayhah also stresses the importance of one language for all the Arabs. However, Frayhah seems to focus here mainly on the Middle East, referring to Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, while Al-Mumkin also referred to the Maghrib.

Both suggest that not one spoken variety should be imposed on the speakers of all the other varieties, but rather that one common spoken variety should be developed. Though Frayhah suggests that this common variety only developed during the last thirty years at the time of writing, i.e. during the period between the twenties and the fifties, due to developments in education, journalism, politics and tourism, Al-Mumkin seems to have been aware of the possibilities. It is not unlikely that Al-Mumkin also belonged to a class of very mobile and relatively well-traveled nineteenth-century intellectuals, and that as such he had some
experience with inter-Arab communication. Of course, this is somewhat speculative, since we have no information about Al-Mumkin at all.

Unlike Al-Mumkin, Frayhah also proposed the replacement of the Arabic script with Latin characters. Frayhah did not discuss this proposal in 1938, but only in his book in 1955.

Since, Iskandar Ma'liuf's position in 1902 was similar to that of Al-Mumkin's in 1882, a comparison can be also drawn between Ma'liuf and Frayhah.

Anis Frayhah's work surely deserves further attention, as well as the context in which it was written, in Lebanon specifically and the Middle East generally, as well as at the American University in Beirut.

Also Frayhah's general intellectual and political orientations might provide use with further insights. Since he studied and taught at several European and American universities, and since he explicitly refers to the sources which he draws his information and insights, it is possible to trace which developments and trends in Western linguistics he was influenced by.
DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE LAST FIFTY YEARS

In conclusion, I want to refer to the fact that the debate was never really closed. By the 1960s, most previous Arab mandates or colonies had gained independence and had defined themselves as Arab states, with the painful exception of the Palestine mandate.

In 1945 the Arab League was founded and its membership has grown now to 22 members, including the Palestinian Authority. As I have stated in Chapter 1, all these member states recognized Arabic at least as one of their national and official languages.

With the foundation of the Arabic Language Academies in Cairo, Damascus, and later in Baghdad and Amman, and the Arabization Bureau in Rabat, as well as the foundation of several cultural and educational departments and commissions of the Arab League, al-'arabīyah al-fusḥā was developed and continues to be developed into a full-fledged modern standard language.

It seems that since these developments no explicit proposals to replace fusḥā as an official language with another (spoken) variety of Arabic are made anymore. Nevertheless, with such a vast literature on the subject, one has to be very careful with such assertions.

However, this does not mean at all that variability in Arabic does not receive any attention anymore. The relation between the spoken and the written varieties continues to be widely debated. The last thirty years, many of these articles and books, lectures and discussions have grown into what Milroy and Milroy (1985) have called a ‘complaint literature’ (Milroy & Milroy, 1985).

For instance, in the magazines of the Arabic Language Academies, as well as a hoist of other cultural magazines, during the period between the 30s and 70s a lot of articles were published that somehow focused on the relation between al-'ammiyah and al-fusḥā, and the ways in which the gap can be narrowed.

The relation between ‘both varieties’ was often referred to as a linguistic struggle (ṣīrā' lugawī) between 'ammiyah and fusḥā.

Since Arab nationalism was developed into a full-fledged political theory during the 1940s and 1950s and its several aspects continued to be debated, a lot of attention was and is also paid to the relation between the Arabic language and Arabic nationalism. One of the most outspoken associations between the Arabic language and Arab nationalism was made by Sāṭī ‘Al-Ḥusrī. (See Suleiman, (1994: 3-24))

The term diglossia ('izdiwağīyah) became very currently used at least since the fifties. It is not very clear where the term was first used, but of course it became famous in Western linguistic literature through Ferguson’s famous article of 1959. It seems that the term was originally used to set the Arabic linguistic situation apart from other ‘normal’ linguistic situations.
As we have seen in the discussion of the debate throughout the decades, it was a general tendency to consider Arabic and the Arabic linguistic situation as exceptional. Conservative positions were defended, by stating that even though it is natural that languages evolve and change, resulting in the replacement of one language (variety) with another, the Arabic case is different. Often this was argued without further argumentation. However, sometimes the special relation between Arabic and the Koran and Islam were mentioned; sometimes, more secularly, the special position of the literary heritage was quoted.

Until now, diglossia continues to be seriously problematized in both Arabic and Western linguistic literature. Very often diglossia is conceived of as a 'linguistic problem' that has to be 'solved,' and most favorably for ever. Many workshops are organized to discuss 'the linguistic problem' and its solutions.

On the other hand, a vast corpus of descriptive studies of Arabic varieties and variability has grown the last decades. In contrast to the previous centuries, varieties other than fushā are studied and described, and this in contrast to the past, not only for prescriptive reasons. For instance, at the University of Cairo there is a section for dialectology within the Department of Arabic.

The last decades, the interest for sociolinguistics also has increased in the Arab world. Many sociolinguistic studies have been published in Arabic the last years. This of course, apart from the many Arab scholars doing research at universities in Europe and the United States and publishing in European languages.
Conclusions

In what precedes, my attempt was to offer a descriptive and analytical account of the *fusḥā-‘āmmiyah* debate, i.e. the debate on ‘standard’ language use versus ‘non-standard’ language use (themselves the objects of intricate patterns of construction and argumentation) in Arabic. This was done by zooming in on a rather short sub-debate conducted in the Arabic periodical *Al-Muqtaṣaf* between November 1881 and July 1882. This approach allowed for a more detailed analysis (presented in Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6) than would have been possible when opting for a broad longitudinal approach. The analysis of this sub-debate (1881-1882) was then used as a steppingstone for an analysis of the wider *fusḥā-‘āmmiyah* debate (presented in Chapter 8). This debate consists of several linguistic reform proposals, and more specifically proposals to standardize *al-‘āmmiyah* and to use it as a written language.

These proposals were forwarded by Arabs (for instance, *Al-Mumkin*, *Iskandar Ma‘lāf*, *Salāmāh Mūsā*, *Anīs Frayhāh*) as well as Westerners living in the Middle East (for instance, Willcocks, Willmore, Spitta, and Volders). However, some important distinctions have to be made between them. Whereas the proposals forwarded by *Al-Mumkin*, *Iskandar Ma‘lāf* and *Anīs Frayhāh* focused on *al-‘āmmiyah* as the basis for one common standard language for all the Arabs, the proposals which Willcocks, Willmore and *Salāmāh Mūsā* forwarded in Egypt were focused on Egyptian *‘āmmiyah* as an Egyptian standard language, to be used only in Egypt. This means that proposals to use *al-‘āmmiyah* as a written standard language were not necessarily related to regional forms of nationalism. Moreover, not all forms of regional nationalism led to linguistic reform proposals, as in the example of Syrian nationalism of which *Anṭūn Sa‘ādah* was the most important representative.

Using a close reading and textual and discursive analysis of the sub-debate (1881-1882) for a deeper understanding of the wider *fusḥā-‘āmmiyah* debate, was only possible by approaching it as a historical event, which took place, not in a vacuum, but within a specific historical context situated in ‘real time’ and which was conducted by real people with real biographies. Therefore, after the textual and the discursive analysis, the sub-debate was brought back to its proper and real-people contexts. This was realized by providing additional information about the magazine in which it was published, namely *Al-Muqtaṣaf* and its publishers, *Ṣarrāf* and *Nimr*, as well as the other debaters. *Ṣarrāf* and *Nimr* were both articulate secularizing Arab Christian intellectuals who were familiar with Western thought. Their intellectual orientation can be described as a strong belief in secularity and science as the basis for general progress. This is indicated by the general purport of
their magazine *Al-Muqatta'a* and their membership of the Masonic Lodge in Beirut and several scientific and literary organizations. Their education at the Syrian Protestant College and their contact with American missionaries such as Cornelius and William Van Dyke and Edwin Lewis also proved to be an essential factor in their intellectual development.

In addition, the majority of the other debaters, namely Ḥalil Al-Yāziği, As'ad Dāḡir, and Mîrî Qandalaft, with the possible exceptions of Al-Mumkin and H.H., who were both anonymous, and the members of the Damascene Literary Society, were Christians. Moreover, all of them had connections with the West via Protestant missionaries. Al-Yāziği taught for a while at the SPC, like his father, Nāṣîf, who had written manuals for it. Moreover, he had assisted Van Dyke with the translation of the Bible into Arabic. Dāḡir too studied at the SPC. Qandalaft had no connections with the SPC, since he lived in Damascus, but in his youth he had learned English from an English Protestant lady and had converted to Protestantism. He also translated religious and liturgical texts into Arabic. Moreover, these participants were all intellectuals active in the domains of writing, journalism and translation. Some of the debaters were also actively involved in politics before and after World War I, such as Nimr and Dāḡir.

All this biographical information was not only obviously essential for a proper understanding of the sub-debate (1881-1882), but it is also, and more importantly, the pivot that links the sub-debate to the wider fushā-āmmīyah debate. Some of the debaters also participated in one or more of the later sub-debates of the wider fushā-āmmīyah debate, as was the case with Dāḡir, as well as Ṣarrāf, for instance. Qandalaft became actively involved in language policy, being one of the founding members of the Arabic Language Academy, which was founded in Damascus in 1919. Some of the positions taken in the sub-debate (1881-1882) can be understood better if they are seen in the light of the social and religious background of the persons who defend them.

For instance, the fact that fushā is staunchly defended can in part be explained by genuine linguistic conservatism. However, if we relate this position to the fact that the defenders of fushā clearly see it as the linguistic bond between all contemporary speakers of Arabic, on the one hand, and between these speakers and their cultural and literary past, on the other, knowledge of their specific social, religious and intellectual backgrounds can add an extra dimension to what at first sight seems only a linguistic argument. The defenders of fushā were highly educated and articulate Christians living in a predominantly Islamic Ottoman Empire, in which they had the social status of protected minority (*dimm*). In the general context of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, these Christians tried to construct a secular Arab identity based on a common language and history. This is further sustained by an almost general lack of religious argumentation in the debate, which means that all the arguments that are forwarded to defend the use of fushā are secular. However, since religion is not directly discussed, we can say that
the general purport of the debate is secular. This does not mean, however, that it can be said to be secularizing, since there are no explicit attempts to undo fuṣḥā of its religious connotations either. Although the argumentation patterns in the debate cannot be considered straightforwardly nationalist, the general focus on language and history as a bond between all Arabs, eventually became an important element of Arab nationalism.

The importance of fuṣḥā as a bond between all contemporary Arabs, on the one hand, and between them and their past, on the other, influenced the ways in which the debaters dealt with variability in Arabic. Their attitudes toward linguistic variability in Arabic could be observed in their explicit descriptions of fuṣḥā and ʿāmmiyah. Fuṣḥā was characterized as having a rich vocabulary, ample possibilities for lexical expansion, precise grammatical rules and as the medium for a rich literary heritage. In contrast, ʿāmmiyah was described as a poor and limited language, characterized by the lack of grammatical rules. Moreover, the contrast between the internal unity of fuṣḥā and the diversity and disunity of ʿāmmiyah was emphasized. The observation that also fuṣḥā is characterized by some degree of variability was strategically downplayed by representing it as being of a non-disturbing kind and even a source of richness.

The linguistic attitudes of the debaters could also be uncovered by a close analysis of linguistic labeling. On one level, an analysis of the use of synonyms was very revealing. For instance, the use of labels such as ‘the book language’ (laqṭ al-kitāb), ‘the writing language’ (laqṭ al-kitāb), ‘the written language’ (al-laqṭ al-maktūb), ‘the ancient language’ (al-laqṭ al-qadīm), ‘the original language’ (al-laqṭ al-aṣṭilah), and ‘the Muḍarī language’ (al-laqṭ al-mudarī) in order to refer to fuṣḥā associates it with a written medium, historicity, authenticity and via the Muḍar tribe with the Quraysh, which was the tribe of the Prophet. ʿĀmmiyah was referred to with the labels ‘the language of speech’ (laqṭ al-takallum), ‘the language of the common folk’ (laqṭ al-ʿāmm), and ‘the language we sucked with the mother milk’ (al-laqṭ allatt narḍaʿūhā maʿa al-laban). The use of these labels associate it with orality, the common people (blurring the fact that also the elite speak it) and the fact that it is acquired ‘naturally’ and not through formal education. However, on another level, labeling is also involved in carving up the continuum of Arabic variability into a dichotomy between fuṣḥā and ʿāmmiyah. Even if the debaters are aware of the variability within fuṣḥā and ʿāmmiyah, (evaluated differently for the two), they usually adhere to this dichotomy. Despite the variability that is covered by the term ʿāmmiyah (and the fact that this variability is often strategically stressed) and despite the fact that fuṣḥā and ʿāmmiyah also have linguistic items in common, the term ʿāmmiyah is used as a convenient collective term for all Arabic varieties that are not fuṣḥā. As such, the characteristics that distinguish these varieties are overruled by one common characteristic, namely their non-fuṣḥā-ness.
The debate also had social dimensions: it was basically triggered by the observation that the ‘āmmah, the common people, were not able to read or understand written *fushā* texts and that this is a problem that has to be solved. However, very soon it becomes clear that the aim of the debaters is not so much to improve the living conditions of the ‘āmmah, but rather the general success of the Arab community (al-‘ummah al-‘arabīyyah). It is also obvious that if the ‘āmmah are to be drawn into the scientific enterprise, they will have to adapt their language use to linguistic norms prescribed by the ḥāṣṣah, the elite. Moreover, they are ascribed the rather passive role of understanding texts and not so much producing them.

The debate and its outcome also had its repercussions on the ways in which Arabic is presently written and spoken. Of course one can only speculate how Arabic would be spoken and written if one of the reform proposals had been accepted and implemented. However, the fact that they were not and that the norms for written and official language remained basically untouched is meaningful for the ways in which variability in Arabic is perceived and evaluated by contemporary speakers. Many Arabic varieties other than *fushā* are prestigious and in some contexts their prestige even overrides that of *fushā*. Some of these varieties, most often the urban variety spoken in the capital, have developed into local or regional standards. This means, for instance, that they are often spoken in conversations between speakers with different dialectal backgrounds. Moreover, the variety spoken in the capital often has become representative for the whole country. Nevertheless, these varieties are invariably labeled as dialects, vernaculars or colloquials, having no official recognition at all.

I think that an analysis of the *fushā*-‘āmmīyah debate can provide us with a deeper insight into the contemporary linguistic situation in the Arab world and more specifically the dominant view that all varieties of Arabic other than *fushā* are dialects. The *fushā*-‘āmmīyah debate consists of several proposals in which the exclusive use of *fushā* as a written language was challenged and the reactions they triggered. By analyzing the underlying ideological patterns in the debate, we can reach a deeper understanding of its outcome, namely the consolidation of *fushā* as the one and only official and written standard language. As such, the debate is not only a language ideological debate, but also a historical debate. This is not simply because it took place in the past, namely during the period between the 1850s and the 1960s, but also because it is part of the history of the current linguistic norms for written and official language use in the Arabic language community.
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Debating variability in Arabic: *Fuṣḥā* versus ‘āmmīyah

Het debat omtrent variabiliteit in het Arabisch: *Fuṣḥā* versus ‘āmmīyah

(Appendix)

Proefschrift voorgelegd tot het behalen van de graad
Doctor in de Taal- en Letterkunde
aan de Universitaire Instelling Antwerpen te verdedigen door
Helge DANIELS

Promotor: Prof. Dr. J. Verschueren

Antwerpen, augustus 2002
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Original texts in Arabic
Translation of the sub-debate in *Al-Muqtaṭaf* (1881-1882)

**INTRODUCTION**

What follows is an integral translation of the eleven articles that constitute the first sub-debate in *Al-Muqtaṭaf* in 1881-1882. The reasons for offering this translation are many.

An important part of the analysis of the ḥisbā-‘ammīyah debate is based on a close reading of this sub-debate, which was presented in Chapters 3 to 6. It was important for me to let the data speak for themselves, by illustrating my analysis with ample quotes from the debate. One of the aims of this translation is to get closer to this aim. First of all, it gives the reader who is not familiar with Arabic the opportunity to read the sub-debate as a whole, namely as a sequence of eleven articles. Secondly, it should allow him or her to put the quotes, which were given in the frame of the analysis, in their proper context of the articles and the sub-debate. In order to facilitate this, I numbered the paragraphs, in the translation and the original texts. These numbers are indicated between square brackets after the page number in the references. This should also facilitate the retrieval of the quotes in the original Arabic texts. As such, I hope to give the reader the possibility to make his or her own interpretation of the articles.

Translation always involves interpretation. In the same way as the nineteenth-century Arab translators were at pains to find appropriate Arabic equivalents for the terms and concepts they encountered in the European texts they were translating, I had the task to find suitable English equivalents for the Arabic terms and concepts I encountered in the texts of the sub-debate. Translating these texts was not always an easy task. Some of the difficulties were already briefly indicated in the analysis before. Nineteenth-century texts sometimes give a false sense of familiarity to the twentieth-century reader. Many terms can easily be read with their modern twentieth-century meanings and connotations, while their meaning is in fact much more ambiguous than it seems at first sight. For example, as indicated in Chapter 5, it is hard to decide whether a term as ‘‘ummah,’ which in general means ‘community,’ had acquired already its full modern sense of ‘nation’ at the moment when these texts were written. Another problem concerns terms such as ‘tahdīth’ (to refine/ to revise/to correct), ‘dabī’ (to regulate) and ‘ḏam’ (to collect/unify), which all can be read as standardization. However, again, it is hard to decide how technical a connotation the debaters gave to such terms. Moreover, since they all involve different aspects of standardization, translating them as such would wipe out the minute difference between them.
One of my main concerns was to keep the ambiguity of many terms intact. Whereas the original Arabic term summons its different associations and connotations at once, many nuances are lost in an English translation. For that reason, in many cases, I chose to translate one Arabic term by using a combination of English terms, and by adding a transliteration of the original term between brackets. Whenever further elaboration was necessary, I provided an explanation in a footnote. I am aware that this is not always the most elegant solution, but this translation should be seen first of all as a work translation, in which I want to indicate as clearly as possible what the debaters try to say, without further literary aspirations. That is also the reason why this is what one might call a 'conservative translation' rather than a 'free translation,' in which I tried to stay as close as possible to the original structures.

Pre-nineteenth-century Arabic texts usually have no or a limited punctuation, while most twentieth-century texts are punctuated. Again, nineteenth-century texts stand somewhere midway. The authors are quite consistent in the use of dots to indicate the end of a sentence, but commas are almost never used. Some authors make use of quotation marks to indicate quotes, but often not consistently, while others do not use them at all. I preferred to indicate all quotes by adding quotation marks myself, whenever needed. Usually, I used double quotation marks when they occur in the original texts and single ones when they are mine. However, in order to avoid any confusion, I always indicate their source in a footnote. All other additions qua punctuation (other than dots and commas) are indicated in a footnote.

Even if all the debaters stress the importance of the clarity and simplicity of language use, they often do not adhere to this principle themselves. At many occasions they try to impress each other by means of linguistic artifice. This includes rhyming prose, which is characterized by rhyme and alliterations. In order to achieve this, the authors often had to use archaic or what they called themselves 'obsolete' or 'strange' words and as a result meaning was sometimes 'lost as a martyr of the form of words,' as Ai-Yağılı worded it. Needless to say that I did not try to adhere to rhyming prose in my translation. Another example of how the debaters try to demonstrate their knowledge of Arabic and its classical literature is the use of archaic words and expressions. Especially Dégir liked to use words and expressions that were drawn from a Bedouin context. Quoting verses of poetry in order to illustrate a point is another stylistic characteristic of the texts. The use of quotes from other classical-medieval linguistic and historical sources has been discussed in detail in Chapter 6 and needs no further explanation here. All these elements enhanced what I have called before 'the elitist character of the debate.'
Whenever necessary and possible, I provided additional information about archaic words and expressions, about the sources of the quotes and their authors, and about persons and places mentioned in the text. When I did not find the information myself, this is also indicated. Apart from that, all translation and interpretation difficulties that remained unsolved are also indicated.

In conclusion, I want to mention that the original Arabic texts are included in this Appendix.
1. ‘Al-lugah al-‘arabiyah wa al-naqah’
(The Arabic language and success)

Ya‘qūb Šarrāf – Fāris Nimr, (November 1881: 352-354)

[1] Those who read the story of George Stephenson which appeared in this issue¹ have seen that this man studied mathematics and other sciences while he was a mere stoker of a steam engine who only had a simple knowledge of reading. Those who succeeded best in their efforts can be found among the Westerners (al-‘afrrang) who studied the higher sciences such as algebra, engineering, natural philosophy, and mechanics, while they work the basest work and only have scientific knowledge [based on] a simple reading. This is because the book language (luğat al-kutub) of the Westerners is not very different from the language they speak (al-lugah allātī yatakallamūn bi-hā). So a commoner (‘āmmī) among them understands a philosophy book just [in the same way] as the commoner among us understands the story of Banī Hilāl.²

[2] Their common people (‘āmmumātihum) avail [themselves] of books [in the same way] as their elite (ḥāssatihum) avail [themselves of them]. Therefore you see that the ways to success (naqāh) are open in the same way for their elite as for their commoners and that the qualities of science are widespread among them. You will see that drivers and plowmen participate in newspapers and [that] they buy more books than most of our elite (ḥāssatunā). This is only because they understand them and avail [themselves] of them. But concerning us, the speakers of Arabic (nahnu al-matākalimān bi-al-lugah al-‘arabiyah), our books, and especially our science books, are written in a language different from the language we speak. The distance (al-bu’d) between both is as the distance between French and English or, more precisely, as the difference between Latin and Italian. Therefore, our common people (‘āmmumātunā) are not able to understand the meanings of books if they did not study their language and acquired its mastery. And this consumes a long time

¹ See the issue of Al-Muqtada that appeared in October 1881 (348-350).
² ‘Afrrang’ is a word that is still often used in Egypt to denote foreigners of western countries. The word is an arabicization of the word ‘Franks,’ which originally denoted only the Franks but came to denote Europeans in general. For more details see also Ayalon (1987:16-17).
³ Banī Hilāl is a famous tribe of the Arabian Peninsula that migrated via Egypt to the Maghrib. They were known as ferocious and heroic warriors. The epic of the Banī Hilāl is one of the most famous folk stories in the Arab world and was one of the first objects of study in the science of folklore.
and immense costs. If the situation remains like this then there is no hope that our commoners will benefit from books. Since the common people are the largest part of the population there is no hope for complete success. If we want to search for success in this domain, the intelligentsia suggested one of three solutions. These are the following.

[3] Either we replace our language with another language (nastabdil lugatuin bi-luqah 'udhri). This is [something] we do not accept for ourselves and that the others do not accept for us, despite that it is possible. We fear that the situation will lead to this in the near future. Or we write our books in the language that we speak (nakub kutuban bi-al-luqah allaft natakallam bi-hd), in the same way as the Italians, the Greeks and other communities ('umam) whose languages became corrupted in the course of time and the reign of the night ignorance did. Then, when the sun of science returned to them they did not see a way to restitute their ancient languages ('irgā' luqātihim al-qadīmah) and they contented themselves with the current languages at that time (al-luqāt al-ṣā'i'ah ḥina'iğin). They refined/revised them (hadhdabūha) and wrote their books in them. For instance, the Latin language became corrupted during the period of the decline of the Roman State. When it became clear to the writers who emerged in the twelfth century and afterwards that the language of speech (luqat al-takallum) had become very distant from the book language (luqat al-kutub) they began to write in accordance with the language of speech. The first books that were written in Italian were poetry [books]. But now [all] the books are written in this language and not in Latin, even though Latin remains used for writing, but restrictedly. If the Italians were presently writing only in Latin, science would not be widespread in their region/country (bilād). What is said about the Italians, can be said about the Greeks who abandoned the ancient Greek language (al-luqah al-yānnīyih al-qadīmah) and used [modern/spoken] Greek (al-rāmīyih) that is related to ancient Greek in the same way as the Arabic we speak (in) (al-'arabīyah allaft natakallam bi-hd) is related to the Arabic we write (in) (al-'arabīyah allaft nakub bi-hd). It is generally known that Latin and [Classical] Greek are two noble and vast ancient languages, which were at a certain time spread over the whole civilized world and books on philosophy, jurisprudence, science and religion were written in them. Nevertheless, the laws of nature predestined their speakers to disregard them. There is nothing that prevents us from following their [example] and regulate the currently spoken language in the Arab lands (fa-nadbdut luqat al-takallum al-ṣā'i'ah ft al-balādān al-'arabīyah) and to write our books in it. [Doing so], we would only follow the natural evolution (al-maḏrāt al-fabi'ti) that forces languages to change with the change of time.

[4] Or we have to teach our children to speak correct Arabic (al-'arabīyah al-ṣahīhah), so that a natural disposition/linguistic habit (malakah) comes in them and
that they speak in the same way as they write. This is in our opinion the noblest, safest and most beneficial solution because correct Arabic has an extensive lexicon (\textit{wāsi'at al-mutān}), precise grammatical rules (\textit{maqṣūrat al-qawā'id}) and a wealth of books (\textit{gānīyah bi-al-kutūb}). This enables it to keep pace with science more than most other languages of the world, especially since it has two extensive categories [for expansion] (\textit{bābān wāsi'ān}), namely arabicization [of loans] (\textit{bāb al-ta'rih}) and compounding (\textit{nahū}). It only needs a language academy (\textit{maqṣūma' luqāwa})[composed] of distinguished scientists that decides upon the arabicization and compounding of words so that they will be used in all the Arab houses (\textit{al-diyār al-\textsc{arabīyah}}). If this was achieved for it and the teachers compelled their pupils, and the fathers their sons, to speak correct Arabic, than it would maybe take twenty or thirty years before the language of speech (\textit{luqāt al-takallūm}) becomes like the writing language (\textit{luqāt al-kitāb}) and the required benefit from the language would be obtained.

[5] Furthermore, we request all the distinguished writers who vie for the welfare of the fatherland (\textit{ḥaṣyr al-wāṭan}), to present their opinions on this issue and to give it due attention. It is very urgent because our experiences in education almost cut our hope to keep pace with the Westerners, or more precisely [to attain] general success (\textit{al-naqāsh al-\textsc{đamm}}). We do not consider shortcomings in our brains, nor in our intentions, nor in our efforts, as its [retardation] cause, because the divine Providence has abundantly provided us with all this. Maybe the cause is the distance between the language of our books and the language of our speech (\textit{ba'd luqāt kutubinā `an luqāt takallumīnā}). Is it not peculiar that some of those who studied a Western language (\textit{luqāh `afrangīyah}) for only three years [are able to] understand scientific books [in it] better than they understand them in Arabic, even though they were raised within the walls of Arabic (\textit{huṣr al-\textsc{arabīyah}}) and studied its morphology, grammar and rhetoric for years?
2. 'Al-.luğah al-‘arbīyah wa al-nağāh’
(The Arabic language and success)

Ḥalīl Al-Yāziği, (December 1881: 404-405)

[1] I read in the respected Al-Muqtaṣaf an article with the title ‘The Arabic language and success’⁴ In summary it contains a study to discover a measure to unite the language of speech (luğat al-takallum) and the writing language (luğat al-kitābah). The outcome of what is mentioned in it is the choice between three methods. One of them is the replacement of our language with another language (’isṭibdāl luğatinā bi-luğah ʿuḥrāt). The second is the replacement of the writing language with the language of speech, meaning the folk language (’isṭibdāl luğat al-kitābah bi-luğat al-takallum ʿaṭī luğat al-‘āmmah). The third is the replacement of the folk language in speech with al-luğah al-faṣḥah (’isṭibdāl luğat al-‘āmmah fi al-takallum bi-al-luğah al-faṣḥah). Since this question is one of the questions that concerns every Arab ( kull ‘arabī) to investigate, I wanted to express the opinion that came up in me. After asking permission of the sirs, the scholars and the writers, I say:

[2] Concerning the first option, namely the replacement of our language with another language, it is generally known that it is of no advantage for the mentioned aim, if this replacement does not comprise the language of speech as well. And this is completely impossible. Concerning the second method, the least that it contains is the destruction of the complete edifice of the Arabic writings (bināyat al-taşāntf al-‘arbīyah) and the loss of a lot of the labor of the predecessors (al-mutaqaddimūn) and subsequently the burden of [spending the same labor] in the future. Moreover, if we approved of this opinion and intended [to apply it], which language of the folk languages (’aṭī luğah min luğat al-‘āmmah) would we use, since between each of these languages and its sister there is a difference qua pronunciation (lahgāh) and conventions (’awdāt), which is at least as large as the difference between each of them and al-luğah al-faṣḥah. So, whichever of these languages we choose to write in, it will take us to what we flee from. As such, in the frame of this pursuit, it is necessary to transform all the languages of the regions/lands (luğat al-bilād) to one language (luğah wāhidah). If this is so, then it is obvious that it is much better and easier to return (‘irgāt) the languages to al-luğah al-faṣḥah, since it has exhaustively treated grammatical rules (mustawfiyat al-qawā‘id), a precise style (muḥkamat al-‘uslūb) and extensive conventional rules

⁴ Quotation marks mine.
(wāsi‘at al-‘awqāt’), which the folk languages (al-luġāt al-‘āmmiyah) do not even approach. This is generally accepted. This is the substance of the third opinion that was mentioned above. It is the most feasible in comparison to the first two methods, even though it is in itself almost unfeasible.

[3] What is taken in consideration here is that the barrier between language and [the understanding of] meaning is not on the part of the language, but rather on the part of the language users. Here I beg the pardon from the sirs the writers for the criticism that I will present in this passage on them, acknowledging that I am the most incapable among them. But now we are only on the side of opinion. So, if we find some soundness in it, we will all follow it. [In this opinion] I will have been guided by their guidance and led by their enlightenment. It is that most writers these days are infatuated with ornamental expressions (tanmīq al-‘ibārāt), they plunge themselves in the choice of strange words (al-ḡarib) and the stuffing of their speech with metaphors, paronomasia, erudite orientations, and so on. As such, the intention is directed to something in the writer himself and not to the intended meaning in his expression and as such, they fall into writing something that is not in its place. The addressed then receives something he does not understand. Then, the meaning is lost as a martyr of [the forms of] words, which are [naturally] only produced in function of [meaning] and the purpose of choosing them is lost. How right is what Abū Ṭayyib’s said:

Being generous when one needs to use the sword is as harmful
for one’s dignity as using the sword when one needs to be generous.

[4] What we mentioned explains their statement that eloquence (al-balāghah) is the adaptation of language use according to the context (muṭābaqat al-kalām li-muqaddā al-ḥāl). By this is meant the situation of the addressed (ḥāl al-muḥātah), depending on his degree of intelligence or stupidity [!] [of the addressed], his knowledge or ignorance, and so on. So, everyone should be addressed depending on his situation and for every context [an appropriate] language has to be made (wa yuqūl ‘al li-kull maqām maqāl). Language use (kalām) that is specifically intended to

5 Abū Ṭayyib is the famous Abbaside poet, Al-Mutanabbī (915-965).

6 What is meant is that everybody needs to be treated according what her or she deserves or needs.

7 Al-Yāziği does not specify whom he refers to with ‘weir.’ I assume that he refers to earlier (medieval) philologists. It occurs often in this debate that the participants refer to writers and poets and that they quote from earlier (often medieval works) without precisely mentioning the complete name of the author or the title of the work they refer to. This is largely because the authors assume that their readers know these authors and their works. It surely enhances the elitist character of the debate.
be addressed to the elite (al-ḥāṣṣah) and which is not suitable for the common people (al-ʿāmmah) is very rare anyway. In my opinion, it should be limited to [genres as] maqāmāt⁸ and poetry, since they [these genres] cannot do without elegant and amazing [language], and some specific aims of the writer which are not intended for a general [reading] public. In all other cases the common people, rather than the elite, should be taken into consideration (murāʿat al-ʿāmmah qabl al-ḥāṣṣah). First of all, one has to turn to the facilitation of meaning, the choice of the clearest words and the simplest structures so that language use has a clear meaning that can be easily understood. Subsequently, one has to turn to the refinement and correction of the expression so that it does not become void of meaning and that it does not obscure the already mentioned clarity, so that the language use is in accordance with the statement of one of them, when he was asked: ‘What is eloquence (ḥalāgah)?’ And he said: ‘It is what the common people understand and what the elite approve of.’⁹ It is not necessary to give the reader more information about the wideness of the Arabic language in ways of expression and the multitude of synonyms differing in clarity and obscurity so that the writer finds for one meaning categories of expressions that enable him to render the meaning that he intends to the most eloquent of the elite (ʿablاغ al-ḥāṣṣah) and the most ignorant of the common people (ʿağhal al-ʿāmmah) without loosing anything of it.

[5] We are spared from giving further examples by what everyone of us sees and hears during nights that are animated until dawn by the reading of Arabic stories, such as the story ʿAntarah and the book of Thousand and one nights, and some stories translated from Western languages. They are all faṣiḥah qua expression (kulluhā faṣiḥat al-ʿibārah), meaning that they are in no way folk language (bi-maʿnā ʿinnahā layṣat min lugat al-ʿāmmah fi šayy'), except for a few slips of the pen [on behalf] of the writers. Nevertheless, they are understood by the listeners, even if they are from the most ignorant masses. They crowd to hear them [the stories], they memorize them and pass their events on, as is generally known. This is because the folk language (lugat al-ʿāmmah) generally does not differ from al-faṣiḥ, only on the level of inflection (ʾirāb), and this does not hamper comprehension. What hinders comprehension are strange words (al-garib) or [those words] that are strange (garib) for them [al-ʿāmmah]. For most [stange words] there exist synonyms in their language (lisānūhum) that are [at the same

⁸ The maqāmāt-literature is an Arabic literary genre that is characterized by linguistic artifice, of which rhyming prose is one example. Most famous are ‘Al-Maqāmāt’ by Al-Ḥarīrī (1053-1122).

⁹ Quotation marks mine.

ⁱ⁶ Quotation marks mine.
time] ِfaṣīḥ. If a writer is sometimes compelled to insert something of these strange words (al-ğarth) in his language use, it can be clarified by adding an argument or commentary, or by inserting a word or a phrase. Anyway, this occurs rarely. All what we mentioned here carries a long elaboration, but we abbreviated it to this measure with the wish to draw the attention of the minds to it, not to report something that is unknown.

[6] [It] remains to see how to make the commoner ('āmmī) able to write in al- faṣīḥ. And this is not an unimportant issue, since it is not in the everyone's capacity to examine the faṣīḥah books and to read the language books, so that he has thorough knowledge of synonyms for 'āmmīyah words. I spent already some of free time for this purpose and I worked on the writing of a book of this sort. I entered in it 'āmmīyah words in alphabetical order and compared it to faṣīḥ [words] with the same meaning, as much as was possible. I search the help of God to make a fair copy and to publish it soon. God is the benefactor who bestows success.
3. 'Mustaqbal al-luğah al-‘arabiyyah’
(The future of the Arabic language)

Al-Mumkin, (January 1882: 494-496)

[1] I read in the sixth issue of the respected Al-Muqata'at an article with the title 'The Arabic language and success.' What appeared to me in it is that the Arabic science books are written in as language that the 'āmmah do not understand as they should understand science books. This is something I experienced myself because often I used to read our books to some industrial workers and they did not understand well what I did not explain to them in the folk language. Then I read the reaction that the respected author and šayḥ Hālī Al-Yāṣīgī presented to us. It appeared to me that the common people ('āmmah) understand science books qua language because they understand the story of 'Antarah and similar stories. It must have escaped the respected [Al-Yāṣīgī] that if the 'āmmah understand books with epic stories, they do not necessarily understand science books because the testimony of the publishers of Al-Muqata'at is clear in this sense and it is based on their long experience. In addition, the 'āmmah do not understand the epic story of 'Antarah in the way they should understand the language of scientific books. If you would ask them the meaning of each single word, or rather the meaning of every single expression, you would notice that their understanding is not more than a dim reflection that approaches or moves away from reality depending on the nearness or the distance of the words to the folk language (luğat al-'āmmah). Nevertheless, they understand the [general] purport of the story, such as 'Antarah vanquished in this occasion after killing thousands of enemies' or 'he vanquished since he met a generous person,' and so on. This is less than what should be understood from scientific books. If he doubts the soundness of what I said, he should examine somebody of those who did not study the language well by reading him pre-Islamic poetry or a page from the epic story of 'Antar and asking him about the meaning of every single word and the [general] purport of every expression. He will see the truth of my statement.

[2] Concerning his opinion about using the folk language (luğat al-'āmmah), that with the difference between the dialects of the Syrians, the Egyptians, the Iraqis

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10 Quotation marks mine.

11 Quotation marks mine.

12 Quotation marks mine.
and the Maghribians (lahaqāt al-sārīyin wa al-miṣṣrifyn wa al-irāqiyn wa al-maġribiyin) it is difficult; it is, even though this difficulty is correct, as in the opinion of the respected [Al-Yaẓīġī], what happened in Arabic (al-‘arabiyyah nafsuhā) itself, not to say that it happened in all languages. Does he not see that correct Arabic (al-‘arabiyyah al-sahihah) is the collection of the different linguistic variants of the Arab tribes (mağmā‘ luqāt qabā‘il al-‘arab al-muḥtaliṣah) and that the multitude of names for one designation is an unmistakable indication that it is a collection of linguistic variants of different tribes (mağmā‘ luqāt ‘aqwām muḥtaλifin)? This is obvious for the one who has the slightest knowledge of the science of language. In the same way as it was possible for the scholars of the first centuries of the Hijra to collect/unify ancient Arabic (‘an yağma‘a‘ al-‘arabiyyah al-qadīmīh) despite their limited means, it is possible for the scholars of this epoch to collect folk Arabic (‘an yağma‘a‘ al-‘arabiyyah al-‘āmmiyah) and to regulate it (wa yaḍababtaḥa). Especially since the possible means for this are many times as much as they were then.

[3] Concerning the loss that [results] from abandoning the ancient language, even if it was magnified by Al-Muṣṭaṣaf and even more magnified by the respected šayḫ, he exaggerated this magnification out of love for the fatherland (ḥubb al-waṭan) and the preservation of the ancient, it is insignificant as compared to the benefits that result from using the folk language (luqāt al-‘āmmah). Because it is certainly known that in Arabic there are no books that are used for industry, agriculture, commerce and all the modern sciences, except for what was recently translated into it from Western languages. After twenty years it will be considered outdated and generally it will not be used anymore. The majority [of books] that is still used are some books on the basics of mathematics, some historical books and books on religion, Islamic jurisprudence and language. The mathematical books do not have any value at this moment, unless for putting them in libraries as vestiges, because the modern mathematical books written by Westerners are immensely much more extensive and simpler. They have to be translated into Arabic if it is desired that mathematics is studied in Arabic. What is said about mathematical books can be said about history books. If they contain a benefit that is indispensable, they can easily be translated into the folk language (yumkin naqiliha ‘ilā luqāt al-‘āmmah bi-suḥulah). The books on religion (kuttub al-dīn) can remain as they are, because the guardians of religion (‘umāna‘ al-dīn) have the task to study and to explain them and this is the larger part of their task, if it is not all of it. The Muslims have

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13 In the original text the word ‘ṣa‘b’ (difficulty) is not mentioned. However, in a note in his second article Al-Mumkin mentions that ‘ṣa‘b’ must be added after the word ‘maġribiyin’ (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 621 [11]).

14 Or: ‘the linguistic variants of the different Arab tribes.’
the example of the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Christians, since the Roman Catholics read their Gospels in Latin and the Greek Orthodox in Greek. Or [they can take the example of] the Persian and Turkish Muslims, since they read the Koran in Arabic. Concerning the books on jurisprudence (kutub al-fiqh), they can be abandoned in favor of the [modern secular] law (nizām). There is no objection against writing the law in the folk language (kitābat al-nizām bi-lugāt al-‘āmmah) so that the elite and the common people can understand it. In my opinion this is an indispensable right, because if otherwise the commoner cannot claim something he does not understand completely. The language books (kutub al-luḡāh) will not be necessary anymore if we start to use the folk language (al-luḡāh al-‘āmmiyah), except for the study of the ancient language (al-luḡah al-qadīmah), for the one who loves to study it as a specialization, in the same way as the Latin and Classical Greek language books (kutub al-luḡah al-lātīniyah wa al-yānānīyah) remain preserved and they are studied by the ones who study those two languages.

[4] Furthermore, if the folk language (al-luḡah al-‘āmmiyah) starts to be used the ancient language will not be obliterated, but rather it will be considered as Classical Greek, Latin and Sanskrit and the people will take pride of their knowledge of it, in the same way as they take pride of their knowledge of these languages. In my opinion this is something that has to happen some time, as Al-Muqtataf stated. So why are we not the initiators then? It looks to me as if all the sirs the writers look askance at me, thinking that I am weakening their rights and that I am lowering the value of the precious jewel which is in their possession. But no, my sirs, do not rush in your judgement, because I swear on your love, that I love al-’arabīyah al-fuṣḥā passionately and I am as jealous about it as second wives are [on their husband], but the case is completely lost. The Arabic that we suckle with the mother’s milk and which is almost the only [language] our tongues speak fluently (al-’arabīyah allān nārḍa’uḥā ma’a al-laban wa takād’al-ismūnā là tanṭalīq ‘illā bi-hā) became very distant from the ancient language (al-luḡah al-qadīmah). As is not hidden to you, language is the first requisite for human success. So, if we do not use a language that our elite and our common people (ḥāṣṣatūnā wa ‘āmmatunā) understand then success will not progress as solidly as we hope. And you, sirs, you are the leaders of this epoch and you will remain its leaders if you regulate the language that you suckled with the mother’s milk and you will have the first grace because you were the initiators. I will conceal my name for you. I will only reveal it to the editors of Al-Muqtataf. If you flip your arrows of reproach to me, then dip them in the love for the fatherland (lubb al-waṭan), because then they will not injure and if they injure they will not hurt.

[5] The summary is that the common people do not understand the language of science books (luḡah kutub al-‘ilm), even if they understand epic stories. The unification and regulation/standardization of the folk language is possible (ṣam‘ al-
‘arabiyah al-‘amniyyah wa qabiyah munmin), in the same way as it was possible to collect\textsuperscript{15} and regulate/standardize ancient Arabic more than thousand years ago. The loss that [will result from] this, if there is any loss, is not equivalent to its benefit. Since I concealed my real name, I will spare the writers who want to compete with me on this subject the trouble of inventing a name for me, I name myself ‘Al-Munmin’\textsuperscript{16} (The Possible) being optimistic about the feasibility of what I believe in. May God give success to that what is right.

\textit{Al-Munmin}

\textsuperscript{15} In an endnote in his second article Al-Munmin mentions in a note that the word ‘\textit{gām}’ has to be added before ‘‘arabiyah’ in the sentence ‘\textit{kamā ‘amkana [\textit{gām]} al-‘arabiyah al-qadīn} wa qabiyah’ (Al-Munmin, 1882b: 621 [11]).

\textsuperscript{16} Quotation marks mine.
4. ‘Nağāh al-‘ummaḥ al-‘arabīyah bi-luqatihā al-‘aṣliyyah’
(The success of the Arab community in and by means of its original language)

The Damascene Literary Society, (February 1882, 551-556)

[1] The transmitters and the scholars (‘ahl al-ru’yah wa al-riwāyah) agreed that the human being is the quintessence of creation and that he is distinguished by nuṭq and bayān from other sorts of animals. By nuṭq we mean the consciousness about all things and by bayān the expression of what is in his mind in order to give benefit to the others of his sort. These two characteristics do not exist in other [beings] in the same way as they exist in him. Despite their [nuṭq and bayān] presence in every community (‘ummaḥ) and every of its individuals, they are clearly differentiated. Depending on their [nuṭq and bayān], differentiation, in surplus or deficiency, communities (‘ummaḥ) and their individuals are differentiated in excellence (al-faḍl) and perfection (al-kamāl). This is confirmed by the spontaneity of the mind (badā‘at al-‘aql) and supported by the indications of transmission (ṣawāhid al-naqil). For the people with sound character and straight thinking it is confirmed that the Arabs (al-‘arab) have the largest share of these two characteristics. Therefore their minds are the most superior minds and their language is the clearest language. The first [point] is uncontestably accepted by Westerners and Easterners and the books of both communities (kutub al-‘ummatayn) are in agreement [about this]. Concerning the second [point], is acknowledged by everybody who has studied the Arabic language (al-luqāh al-‘arabīyah) and some other languages. Persian, Turkish and Greek scholars who have studied Arabic announce this publicly and they are not afraid to be blamed for this. This has been singled out in the writings of some of the erudite people, in ancient and modern times. Among them is the editor of Al-Ḡawā’ib17, [who confirmed this] in a book of him in which he compared the Arabic language with Western languages and demonstrated the uniqueness of the first in its excellence, despite that he studied both in detail. Many excellent scholars have done this.

[2] It was the painstaking care of the scholars (‘ulama‘) at the Arabic language (al-luqāh al-‘arabīyah) that made them write about its vocabulary (mufradātuhā), its syntax (qumaluhā) and specific characteristics (ṣaṣqātisuhā) as many books as the stars, so that the mind can almost judge that they did not lose any detail of it.

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17 The editor of Al-Ḡawā’ib was Ahmad Fāris Al-Šidyāq (1804-1888), a Maronite Christian who after converting to Protestantism converted to Islam (adding name Ahmad to his names). He was active as a writer, journalist and translator.
Something similar has never happened for another [language]. They also wrote on the several sciences ('ulūm), crafts (ṣanā'i') and arts (funūn) in Arabic, [so much] that it confuses the mind, despite the fact that a lot of it has gone with the wind and was scattered with the debris of storms. Despite their claim that they arrived at the highest top of the sciences, the Westerners still borrow from [these works], study what remains of them, spend a lot of money to purchase them and effort to copy them. One of the authors mentioned in what he wrote to Al-Muqtaṣaf that a translator of the French army informed the Geographic Society in Paris about the presence of thousands of precious Arabic books in Kairouan and [said] that interest in the translation of some of these valuable books would offer the French community/nation (al-'ummah al-fransāviyah) advantages that it would never have counted on. He requested [the Geographic Society] to inform the leaders of the above-mentioned army to trail these precious vestiges and to seize everything that helps to [acquire them] whatever it takes. The one who read ‘Kašf al-ẓuqān ‘an 'asma' al-kutub wa al-funūn’ knows for certain what we have said despite that it is not possible for him to inspect or study thoroughly, because it is impossible. We still see in the Arabic books that we have with us, despite their scarceness, issues of which the Westerners claim that they have discovered them. The excuse they have for this is that they did not investigate [these Arabic books]. These days we see in Damascus epistles of one of the Arab philosophers, in some of them he mentioned general gravity, of which the Westerners claimed that the first to investigate it was one of their later philosophers, mentioning that it offered philosophy enormous advantages. Since this is something about which people do not disagree we content ourselves with this scope in order to be brief and concise.

[3] With this as an introduction, we say that the two respected writers, the publishers of Al-Muqtaṣaf (al-'adthān al-bā'īn muḥarrirā al-muqtaṣaf) wrote an article [with] the title ‘The Arabic language and success’ in which they both requested to present a means to unify the language of speech (luqāt al-takallum) and the writing language (luqāt al-kitābah), so that the elite person and the commoner (al-hāṣ wa al-'āmm) can share in the way of giving and receiving [scientific knowledge]. They mentioned three methods. The first is the replacement of our language with another [language] (‘istibdāl luqātīn bi-luqāh 'uhrd). The second is the replacement of the writing language with the language of speech, meaning the folk language (‘istibdāl luqāt al-kitābah bi-luqāt al-takallum 'ayy luqāt al-'āmmah). The third is the replacement of the folk language in speech with

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\(^{18}\) Quotation marks mine. The book is a bibliographical work written by Hāgī Hātifah (Constantinople, 1608-1657). The book is said to contain some 15,000 names of Arab writers.

\(^{19}\) Quotation marks mine.
al-faṣīḥah (‘istiḥdāl luṭat al-‘āmmah bi-al-luṭah al-faṣīḥah). One of the friends of Arabic (‘ahad ‘ahillā‘ al-‘arabīyah), with lofty ambitions wrote [something] that uncovers the truth. He expounded that there is no method to unify (gām) [the spoken and the written language] and if it is necessary, there is only the third [method], together with the avoidance of odd and obsolete words (al-kalāmāt al-hūṣīyah wa al-waḥšīyah). He also mentioned that the two first methods are very difficult to apply. The two authors mentioned above referred to this [as well]. Al-Ḥalīl referred already to an aspect that impedes [the application of] the first method, and this is the replacement of our language with another language, namely that it is not useful unless this replacement also comprises the language of speech. And this is completely impossible. Provided that we presupposed it possible, then taking recourse to the third method is more adequate, because it is easier to achieve since many words will remain the same and morphology and syntax will not be changed in most cases, as is generally known. It is also more adequate because of its distance from the literary and political danger (al-maḥḍūr al-‘adab wa al-maḥḍūr al-sīyāṣī) that is comprised in the second solution. I mean the effacement of the ḡinsīyah that heralds weakness, humility and inferiority, since the language of a community/nation (luṭat ‘ummah) is not lost unless it [community/nation] is lost itself and its ḡīns is obliterates. By obliteration we do not mean physical obliteration, but mental obliteration, which is for people with a taste bitter than the first, provided that [the latter] is the main cause of [the first]. This is what happened to the people of Malta, and everybody knows who they are.

[4] Concerning the second method, Al-Ḥalīl referred already to an aspect that makes it inapplicable, because it comprises the loss of the writings of the noble predecessors (al-‘aslāf al-kirām), by means of which the inteligentsia (‘ulā al-‘ifḥām) compete, and the burden to write similar [writings] in the future. This contains what it contains, as is generally known. Especially, since the folk languages are clearly very different (luṭāt al-‘āmmah muḥtalifah ‘iiṭlā‘an bayyinān) and their unification into one language is unfeasible (wa gām‘uḥa‘ alā luṭāt wāḥidah minḥā muta‘ddirah). [Even] if we presuppose its possibility, than it is [still] more adequate to return them to the original language (‘irğā‘uḥa ‘īlā luṭāt al-‘aṣīlyah), because it has a rich grammar (mustawfār al-qawā‘īd), abundant meanings (wāfīyat al-maqāṣid), [and has] precise specific and typological rules (madībat al-‘awdā‘ al-sāḥṣīyah wa al-naw‘īyah). In this the folk languages (al-luṭāt al-‘āmmihayn), and the languages of the Western communities (luṭāt al-

20 Note the pun in the reference to Halīl Al-Yaṣīrī’s reaction: the word used for friends is ‘‘ahillā‘‘, which is the plural form of the word ‘halīl’ (friend).

21 This sentence can be read both in the active and passive voice, depending on the vocalization ‘al-mu‘ījun’ (heralds) or ‘al-mu‘īdan’ (heralded in). However, the global interpretation remains the same.
"umam al-'ağnabīyah), as we have concluded before, do not even approach it. [This] together with [the fact] that the commoners understand it easily if strange words are avoided (suḥūlat al-fāhīm 'alā al-awāmm iǧā uṣūnīb al-hāṣī min al-kalām). Moreover, what is written in the folk language (luqat al-‘āmmah) is hard to understand. If it is written in the same way as it is pronounced, it would be more similar to the language of the Circassians or the Albanians. One of the superior writers wrote once a story in their language (lugatuhum) and it was difficult to read and understand for both the elite (al-hāṣṣ) and the common people (al-‘āmm). If we would not fear to elaborate too much, we would relate it here. If somebody would claim that many of the merchants write in the folk language (al-luqah al-‘āmmīyah), we say: 'Certainly not!' Rather most of what they write are Arabic words (kalimāt ‘arabīyah) which they learned from their teachers when they were young. Their non-conformity to the grammatical rules of inflection (qawātīd al-‘irāb) and the insertion of some colloquial words (kalimāt ‘iṣṭilāḥīyah) does not harm comprehension. One of the great historians devoted a chapter to it.

[5] This, and despite the clarity of the proofs that were enumerated in an article with the title 'The future of the Arabic language' somebody turned to the second solution, arguing that the common people (al-‘āmmah) do not understand the language of the elite (al-hāṣṣah). He draws his conclusions with regard to this from the fact that often he used to read some science books to some of the commoners (‘awāmm) and they did not understand what he did not explain to them in their language as they should [understand it]. And that there is one from the commoners (‘awāmm) who understands the meaning of every word of the pre-Islamic poems or the story of Anitar if it was read to him. We say that the fact that the commoners (‘awāmm) do not understand scientific books written in Arabic is not due to the fact that they do not understand their vocabulary. If this were the case then everybody who masters the Arabic language should easily be able to read on the sciences written down in Arabic, and this is not the case. If the expert of the Arabic language studied the easiest engineering book, optics, arithmetics or algebra, it would not be easy for him to understand, unless he has experience in the discipline and if he studied the terminology of the discipline (muṣṭalāḥat al-fann). This is in our opinion something two persons would not disagree about. And this is not because of the non-understanding of vocabulary, or the syntactic structures, or the terminology of specialists of the field, when we would assume

22 Quotation marks mine.

23 Quotation marks mine. In the original round brackets are used to indicate the title.

24 The original Arabic text mentions 'al-tahrīr fit-hā', which is probably a printing mistake for 'al-ḥabrīr fit-hā' (the expert in it).
knowledge thereof, but rather because it [understanding] depends on theoretical things, of which the understanding depends on instruction. If not, somebody who knows French, in which the language of speech and the writing language are in agreement, can, if he wishes, study all the scientific fields and all branches of industry written in [French], simply because of his knowledge of the language. As such, the French government/state (dawlat firansā) and similar [governments/states] then have to close their schools and content themselves with the spread scientific, technical and industrial books. With this [measure], they will not need to spend enormous amounts of gold and silver. Indeed, science and technical books are maybe more incomprehensible for the commoner (‘āmmī) because he did not study the [conventional] meaning of some words (wa’d ba’d al-kalimāt). However, this does not harm what we said because of our condition that first of all obsolete words must be avoided (’iğtināb al-kalimāt al-waḥšiyah). If they are avoided, then our claim is confirmed. Indeed, there are some of the commoners (‘awāmm) who do not understand many of the familiar words (al-kalimāt al-ma’ānīyah). However, this is rare and the rare can be considered non-existing. Moreover, this is not specific for our commoners. I do not think that anybody would claim that, for instance, all the French commoners (‘awāmm al-faransāwīyīn) understand expressions written in French in the same way as their most specialized scholars (ḥawāsṣ ‘ulamā’īhim) understand them and that they understand the poems of their poets in the same way as their poets do. What indicates that Al-Mumkin did not reflect on the article of Al-Ḥallī and his remarks concerning the conditions he made, is his demand to one of the commoners (‘āmmī min al-‘awāmm) to understand pre-Islamic poems, which contain many obsolete words (al-kalimāt al-waḥšiyah), because the research is [focused on] familiar and current language use (ma’nīs al-luqāh wa musta’maluhā). Even many of our distinguished contemporary writers have difficulties to understand them.26 This does not necessarily mean that they do not know the Arabic language. There is no need to use these words which are incompatible with fasādah for us because of their strangeness (li-gardabatihā), even if they were fasīdah for the people of that epoch. We suffice with a quote of text written by Al-Ṣaḥī Al-Ḥillī27 to someone, in which he informed him that he read his diwān. He said that it contained no shortcomings, but that only it did not contain any Arabic words (‘alFāṣīt, ‘arabīyah).

26 This probably refers to obsolete words (al-kalimāt al-waḥšiyah), but it can also refer to pre-Islamic poetry (al-qasī ’id al-ghālīfīyāh).

27 Ṣaḥī Al-Ḥillī (1278-1348) was a well-known poet. For more details on his life and work, see Heinrichs (1995a: 801-805).
[6]  

Al-hayzabān and al-dardabīs and al-tōhā, al-muqāb and al-‘Ēlabīs  
Al-gatārīs, al-saqhadab, al-saq’ab, al-harbabasīs and al-‘ayfamūs  
Al-harrāqī, al-‘afanqas, al-‘aflaq, al-tifīsān and al-‘asīs

A language for which the ears have a distaste  
when it is pronounced, while the souls are nauseated  
It is repugnant that the one with distaste inserts the obsolete from it  
and abandons the familiar  
The best words are those that move the hearer  
and by which the companion is healed  
Where is my saying, this is an ancient sandhill  
in comparison to my saying ‘aqanfal qadmūs

We will not find a singer chanting  
qafānabakī on the lute when the drinking glasses pass  
Do you think, if I said to my beloved yā ‘ilq,  
that she would know that it means my dearest darling  
Do you think, if I said ḥabb al-‘īr  
that I meant the camels passed  
These languages are studied  
the people are led by what their leader says  
These hearts are made of iron  
and beautiful words are magnets

[7]  The confirmation that the use of obsolete words is incompatible with ḵasāḥah  
was mentioned in one of the issues of Al-Muqtāfat, quoting one of the authorities  
of rhetoric, namely the commentator on (Ṣāriḥ) Al-miṣfāh26 and supported with  
quotes from the Noble Book (al-kiṭāb al-‘aṣrī). Concerning his argument that it is  
possible to unify the folk language (luḡat al-‘āmmah) despite that it is different in  
every country (qurṭ), in analogy with the unification of the different variants  
(luḡāt) of the Arab tribes. After accepting that the canonized Arabic language (al-  
luḡah al-‘arabīyah al-mudawwannah) is a collection of different variants (maḏmū‘

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26 Since Al-Hilīfī tries to make the point that the extensive use of old (pre-Islamic) Arabic words  
makes a poem incomprehensible, I deliberately chose not to translate these words in the poem itself.

27 This is a reference to a commentary on ‘Miṣfāh al-‘ulām’ (written by Al-Sakkākī) (Bonebakker,  
1978: 863-864), which might be ‘Kitāb al-miṣbāḥ fl al-ma‘ānī wa al-bayān’, generally known as ‘Al-  
miṣbāḥ,’ written by Badr Al-ǆ-Dīn Ibn Mālik (d. 686/1287) (Heinrich, 1995: 894). Note that in his  
second article, Al-Munkīn refers to the commentator on (Ṣāriḥ) Al-miṣfāh.
Concerning Al-Mumkin's argument that the benefits that result from using the folk language (\textit{luğat al-‘āmmah}) for written purpose outdo the benefits of preserving the original language (\textit{al-luğah al-‘aṣliyah}), because of the absence of Arabic books that can be used for industry, agriculture, commerce and modern sciences, except for [the books] that were translated recently and that the majority of [the books] in the Arabic language that are used are just some books on the basic principles of mathematics, and some history books, and religion, jurisprudence and language books. It comprises false claims.

Concerning his claim [about] the absence of books that are used in industry, agriculture, commerce and the modern sciences, it deviates from what all the nations are in agreement about. Do not let his exaggeration in the description of the sciences as modern (\textit{hadīthah}) mislead you. All the sciences that he called modern are tantamount to ancient sciences into which only some additions (\textit{ziyādāt}) and corrections (\textit{tanqīḥāt}) that were achieved during the successive times and by the accumulation of thoughts, as is the case in all sciences and arts. For instance, physiognomy (\textit{fann al-hay’ah}) cannot be said to be a modern science, even though some [new] specifications and realizations were achieved that required the perfection of the instruments and the examination of it from all sides. This is equally so for medicine (\textit{al-tibb}) and other [sciences]. All the sciences that he called modern are ancient [sciences]. On all the ancient sciences the Arabs have uncountable writings. Indeed, in this epoch some issues of a domain were [further] specified with a special name, devoting special attention to its case, in the same way as the predecessors did with hereditary questions, which was a subdivision of jurisprudence and the treatment of eyes, which was a subdivision of medicine. This is incontestably [a question of] terminology (\textit{‘iṣṭilāh}). We do not deny that the additions which they added are important additions which the professionals are required to know. The method to realize this is their translation into the original language (\textit{al-luğah al-‘aṣliyah}), [which has] precise grammatical rules, using familiar words in usage, which the elite (\textit{al-ḥāṣal}) approve of and which the common people (\textit{al-‘āmmah}) are acquainted with. The lack of some words that are synonymous to some terminological words (\textit{al-kalimāt al-‘iṣṭilāḥiyah}) is not harmful, as long as the arabicization belongs to the categories of Arabic and the coining of new [words] is easy. This is what the predecessors did. So, 'kahrabā’.

\footnote{Quotation marks mine.}
[electricity] is a Persian word and ‘ğiğraftyâ’ [geography] is a Greek word that were arabicized by the Arabs. The scholars have singled this out in their writings.

[10] Concerning his claim that it is possible to translate the books that are indispensable easily to the folk language. It is an invalid claim, as you know. Concerning what he suggested to the Muslims among the Arabs that they will become as the non-Arabs in their reading of the Noble Book, namely a reading that is only devoted to the structures without considering the meanings. This suggestion would only be accepted if they made him their advisor on this [matter]. Concerning his claim that both the publishers of Al-Muqaṭṭaf and their friend (ḥaliuhumā)\(^{31}\) were only led to exaggerate the damage that results from abandoning and discarding the original language by the love for the fatherland (ḥubb al-wāṭan). This is a correct claim and they are proud of it.

[11] We inform the supporters of the Arabic language with lofty ambitions that since months the Charity Society of Damascus took measure to facilitate the application of the third solution and that its president, the authority ẓayḥ ‘Alā’ Al-Dīn Efendi started to write a book that facilitates the ‘āmmah to replace their language with the original language so that it can be taught in the primary schools. It is almost completed. Concerning his claim that this has to happen some time. Its correctness is unknown in our opinion. Hopefully he leaves it to time to reveal it.

The Damascene Literary Society.

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\(^{31}\) This is again a pun on "Halil Al-Yacizi"'s name.
5. "Istiḥālat al-mumkin 'iḏā 'amkana'  
(The impossibility of Al-Mumkin if it were possible)  

Asʿad Dāġir, (February 1882, 556-560)

[1] The success of the lands (naḡāḥ al-bilād) is pinned on assiduity and diligence. Diligence exists only in the hoisting of the flag and the minaret of science and the consolidation of its empire and its supporters, until the army of ignorance suffered a crushing defeat and withdraws in confusion and terror. As such we will have the opportunity to overcome the difficulties and to invent wondrous things by discovering wondrous curiosities. The nightingale of commerce will sing melodies of success on the branches of profit. The tongue of the situation of agriculture and industry will call out with the voice of good progress: ‘Come to salvation.’

[2] Despite that we, thanks to the magnanimity of God, are not deprived of solicitude of the excellent intellectuals whose hearts are soaked with love for the fatherland and the intentions for its progress and success, who have thrown off the rags of fanaticism and dressed themselves in the garments of harmony and unity. [Despite] the zeal of men who have shaken off the dust of laziness and who have exhausted the riding animals of assiduity and diligence. [Despite all this] there is still one obstacle that prevents us from reaching the summit of our highest aims. The only thing that prevents us from achieving our complete success (naḡāḥunā al-tāmm) is the distance between our writing language and our language of speech (al-taḥbīd bayn luḡat kītābaṭīnā wa luḡah takallūmīnā). As such, our common people (āmmatunā) do not understand a thing of what our elite (ḥāṣṣatunā) write on science. As such, the thoughts of those who are concerned about the progress of the lands (taqaddum al-bilād) were at a loss over this matter and they made it for its sake their foremost preoccupation. They considered for this [matter] three opinions as appeared in the sixth issue of the respected Al-Muqtaṣaf. The first is the replacement of our Arabic language with another language (‘iḥdāl luḡatinā al-ʿarabīyyah bi-luḡāt ʿulūrā). The second is the replacement of the writing language with the folk language (‘iḥdāl luḡat al-kītābaḥ bi-luḡat al-ʿāmmah). The third is the replacement of the folk language with the writing language (‘iḥdāl luḡat al-ʿāmmah bi-luḡat al-kītābaḥ).

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30 Quotation marks mine. The phrase ‘ḥayya ʿalā al-falāḥ’ (come to salvation) is also used in the Islamic call to prayer.
[3] Concerning the first, its inappropriateness was already pointed out. Since it is impossible the focus was limited to the second and the third [opinion]. As such, the outstanding writer, al-ṣayḥ Ḥattāl Al-Yāziḡī presented us the opinion on this question that came up in him. He preferred the third [method] (the replacement of the folk language with al-faṣṭḥah) above the second (the replacement of al-faṣṭḥah with [luḡāt] al-ʿāmmah). He excelled in presenting the consolidation of this sound opinion. He deserved for it lavish praise. The more since it did not take long until an article arrived to us in the eighth issue [of Al-Muqṭaṣaṭ] undersigned by Al-Mumkin (and if you wish, say Al-Mustahīl) as reaction on the opinion of the respected ṣayḥ mentioned above. An article, [which was] pleasing qua form, but disturbing qua content for many of the readers of Al-Muqṭaṣaṭ, even if it disclosed some patriotic zeal and Arab ardor in its writer, because he tried to show an opinion that is far from possible, completely impossible.

if they say that the impossible consists of three
then this is to those the fourth

The impossibility of this opinion is clarified by several aspects, of which we mention the following.

[4] First, the diversity of the folk language (ʾiḥṭīlāf luḡāt al-ʿāmmah). It is not easy for us to make one of the folk languages the writing language (luḡāt al-kitābah) while it contains so much diversity and divergence of its sections (wa fi-hā min ʾiḥṭīlāf wa taṣaʿaʿ ub al-ʾatrāf), that it leads to an astonishing amazement. Each of these languages is different qua pronunciation and conventions (kull luḡah min hādihi al-luḡāt al-muḥtaṣifah lahghtan wa ʾawdāʾun) as a foreign language is in comparison to other languages. If we were able (hypothetically) to write a book in the Syrian language (al-luḡāt al-sūrīyah), for instance, would the Iraqi (al-ʾirāqī) benefit from it? Would the Maghrībi (al-maḡribī) not laugh at it? Would the Egyptian (al-miṣrī) not ridicule it? The dialect of which province of Syria (lahgāt ʾaṣṣaytī muqṭaṣaʿa ih min sūrīya) will we use, or rather which city (madīnah), or rather which village (qaryāyah), or rather which neighborhood (ḥārah)? Since the respected Al-Mumkin knows that in Syria itself there are several folk languages (luḡāt ʾṣāṭā ʾāmmīyah) that differ mutually from each other as much as al-luḡāt al-faṣṭḥah differs from the folk languages (al-luḡāt al-ʿāmmīyah). This I experienced

31 Round brackets original.
32 Round brackets original. Al-Mustahīl means 'The Impossible' which is of course a reaction on the choice of 'Al-Mumkin' (The Possible) as a penname.
33 Brackets original.
myself, not from hearsay, in the period of my stay in Ġabal Al-Nuṣayrīyah. Although I went to one of the villages of this mountain as a teacher for the children, I was obliged to spend a lot of time learning their vernacular/dialect (lahgātum) and their conventional language use (‘istilāh kalāmīhīm), since I felt to be a stammering barbarian (‘aḡam ūmīm) among them. I did not understand and was not understood. As such, three months passed until I was able to express myself fluently in conversation with them.

[5] If not for limited space, I would have liked to mention something of their strange colloquial words (‘alfāzum al-‘āmmīyah al-ḡarībah) and their obscure expressions (‘ibārātum al-ḡamīdah). What is more appropriate for me to mention here is that they understood me much better when I read to them something from religious, historical or literary books, than when I told them something in my folk language (luqat al-‘āmmīyah). Every time when I arrived to a sentence that was difficult for them, I always started to explain it in my folk language increasing the difficulty and obscurity for them. So, I explained “Ka’anânâ wa al-ma’ min ḥawlinâ” (as if we were surrounded with water) in [the phrase] “qawm ḥulûs ḥawlum ma”34. If I recited to them a line of poetry they were very at much at ease to listen to it, despite that it belongs to the peculiarities of al-ḡūgah al-faṣīḥah, while they did not understand a thing of the mu’ānnâ35 which is used by the people of Lebanon and its surrounding regions, and even though it is like the Mu’allaqât36 of the folk language for the Lebanese (mu’ta’allaqāt al-ḡūgah al-‘āmmīyah ‘inda al-lubnāntîn). The conclusion is that their language is closer to al-faṣīḥah than it is to the other folk languages. Compare this province (muḥāfaẓah) to the other provinces of Syria. Compare Syria to Iraq, the Maghrib and Egypt, and other [regions].

[6] There is no way for Al-Munkûn to object [to this, by arguing] that the same diversity occurred in al-ḡūgah al-faṣīḥah. These accidental differences are just an unessential matter that is not taken into consideration. Despite the differences of opinion between the grammarians in all places and at all times, all of them are in complete agreement about the nominative (raṭ’) of the agent, the subject of a nominal clause and the predicate of a nominal clause and the accusative (naṣḥ) of the objects, the circumstantial expression, the specification and the genitive (ḥafād) for the genitive attribute (muḍūf ‘ilayhi) and the word governed by a preposition

34 Quotation marks original. The quote means ‘people sitting [being] surrounded by water.’

35 A popular Lebanese unmetrical poem with end rhyme.

36 The Mu’allaqāt are a famous collection of pre-Islamic poetry. For some reason Dāġir calls them ‘Muta’allaqāt.’
(mağrūr bi-al-harf), and that the subordinate receives the case-ending of the principal, and other general rules. When the opinions on a certain question are manifold in the elaborate studies, after it is mentioned the opinion of the majority as is the case in Al-'Arūżah, Al-‘Āsmānī and Ibn ‘Aqīl and others.

[7] Although al-luqāh al-faṣīḥah is a collection of the different variants (luqāt) of the Arab tribes with as an indication “the multitude of names for one designation” (as such).39 This does not invite us to avoid it, evading the difficulty of adopting it, but rather the multitude of synonyms in it facilitates for us the art of compositions and poetry. Whether [al-faṣīḥah] is a collection of variants (luqāt) or not, it is the same. Whether it contains few or many synonyms, it is for all its writers and scholars in all places and directions one language (luqāh wāḥidah). If [Al-Munkin’s] conclusion is correct, then it does not apply to the sedentary world (al-hadār), because it [applies to] the days of the Bedouins (badāwah) between tribes, of which most are gone now. But the faṣīḥah language of civilization is the same (luqāt al-hadārān al-faṣīḥah hiya hiya) in Egypt, Syria, the Maghrib, Iraq, in its morphology, grammar and all its literature, unless some rare exceptions, in contrast with the folk language. Its pronunciation is diverse (lahgatuhā muhtalifah) and its conventions are diverse (‘awdā’uhā mutabāyīnah. The Syrian laughs at the dialect/pronunciation of the Egyptian (lahgat al-misrī), and the Egyptian at that of the Maghrabian, the Maghrabian at that of the Iraqi, and the Iraqi at that of the Syrian. The truth is that they all cause indisputably laughter and ridicule. Without consensus about one dialect (lahgah wāḥidah) the situation will become very difficult.40

[8] Secondly, the unsuitability of the folk language to become the writing language. Suppose that it were possible for us to use one of its dialects and that the [first] obstacle were dropped, then we have yet another obstacle, which is as difficult and impossible as the first one. This is the unsuitability of any of these folk languages to be a writing language, because its conventions are confined (‘awdā’uhā ḥariqah) and its words are disgusting (‘alīfāzūhā samiğah). There are no rules to regulate it (lā hudūd lī-dabīṭāh) and no specifications to determine it (wa lā qayād la-rabīṭāh). It unites in itself eloquent and delicate words (gazl al-lafz wa raqiqihi) with stupid and vulgar language use (sāḥīf al-kalām wa rakīkihi).

39 Quotation marks and round brackets original.

40 Literally: ‘we have to undo a thorny branch of its leaves in a dark night’ (ḥart al-qatād ft al-laylah al-qulmā’).
A language for which the ears have a distaste
when it is pronounced, while the souls are nauseated⁴¹

[9] [It is] unlike al-luqah al-fasīlhah, since it avoids to be all what was mentioned. Rather it has an extensive corpus (wāsiʿat al-mutūn), wondrous arts and marvelous branches ('aḏībat al-funūn wa ǧarībat al-ṣuqūn). It has precise grammatical rules and regulated styles (madḥūbat al-qawā'īd wa muḥkamāt al-ʿasālīb). It has categories, such as derivation ('ištiqāq), conjugation (taṣrīf), compounding (naḥṭ), arabicization [of loans] (taʿrīb), and inflection (iʿrāb), for which the other languages envy it. It has epitomes (iḥtāṣārāt), metaphors (istiʿārāt), metonyms (kiṇāyāt) and other literary devices, which make the intelligentsia tremble with delight and amazement. It has books on all the arts and subjects, which decorate the inner parts of the museums and libraries. With it [al-fasīlhah] we became able to keep pace with science, better than the others, because we have the devices of [morphological] derivation (ištiqāq), compounding (naḥṭ), and the arabicization of loans (taʿrīb) that suffice us in the effort of devising the new words that are required. We would not, while the situation is like this, proceed to demolish the knowledge of it and to annihilate its institutions, willingly or not, and satisfy by this a folk language (luqah ʿāmmīyah) that has no more than ungrammatical language use (laqūw) and senseless jabber (ḥaḍayān).

[10] It has been said in the definition of language (luqah) that it is sounds by means of which every people (qawm) expresses its purposes. But we do not see that the folk language (al-luqah al-ʿāmmīyah) can carry out our aim in this regard, unless our purposes are limited to greetings, condolences, felicitations and other oral forms of showing deference, even though it is in this, in my opinion, the language of subtlety and shrewdness (diplomacy).⁴²

[11] If somebody said to me, indeed in its current condition it [al-luqah al-ʿāmmīyah] does not fulfill the desired [purposes] and it does not achieve the demands, but it needs regulation (qāb̲r wa taḥkīm) as Al-Mumkin suggested. I say that maintaining the extreme point of this significant misadventure [namely the regulation of al-ʿāmmīyah] (iʿqīʿ ʿād gārīb ḥaḍa al-ḥaṭ̲h al-γalāl) comprises a loss of time, the undergoing of efforts and the cost of heavy losses to no avail. Who guarantees the feasibility of the unification of this language (γαμ ʿ ḥaḍīhi al-luqah)

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⁴¹ Note that this line was taken from the poem that the Society quoted from Al-Ḥilli (Society, 1882: 555 [6]). However, since the articles where published in the same issue, we must assume that Dāğer and Society quoted from Al-Ḥilli independently.

⁴² Brackets original.
that was dispersed in all the lands as a tribe that disintegrated into small groups, and without it [this feasibility] we will completely lost (min dunihi ta'yiq sahiq).

[12] In doing so, the creation of a new language (‘istinbät luqah xaddahe) would then be easier for us than patching this shabby (jalaq) language (or rather shabby in the plural (‘aflaq) because all of them are worn out and ragged), which is trouble for nothing (al-ta’ b sudan). But, why do we wander in the darkness of the night, if a lightening star is shining.44 We have a faṣṭah language, [which is] beautiful and clear. No one will deny the general consent about is soundness. It only needs a language academy (maqma’ luqawi) of the people of science and critical examination, to purify it from eloquent [but] obsolete words (li-tanqiyatih min al-la’ifuq al-gazilah al-wahstiyah), to filtrate its grammatical rules from absurd opinions (tasfiyat qawdi idhā min al-arad al-sahifah) and to remove all what is in their opinion considered improper, that good taste rejects and that the lofty mind finds distasteful. They will judge the application of the categories of compounding and arabization. They will order their [compounding and arabization] application in a single way in all the regions (‘ulā namat wāhid fi mutlaq al-anhā). So that if it is done in this way, and if it circulates on the tongues from the writers and orators, the teachers and the educated, then we only have to commission the fathers to train their sons to speak [al-faṣṭah] from childhood on. Then no more than a third of a generation will pass until we reach perfect success. We rely on God. I only smelled the odor of hatred and loath for al-arabfyah al-faṣṭah in Al-Mumkin’s article. Despite the laudation that was insinuated in his statement that he loved [al-faṣṭah] with the love of the lover and that he jealously protects it with the jealousy of co-wives. Maybe he belongs to the group of those who in the respected weekly considered the opinion to replace it with a foreign language. When at that moment he did not see any success for his opinion and no circulation for his merchandise, he lurked without showing a movement until he had the free scope when this question was raised in the debate section. So, he embarked turning away from al-luqah al-faṣṭah (or rather from the straight path) toward its rival (ṣarratun), the folk language (al-luqah al-‘ammiyah), being at pains to make us incline toward him and to incite us to consent the soundness of his opinion. Nevertheless, all this does not concern me, and neither is he the subject of

43 Brackets original. Dāgīr admits here that there is not one luqah ‘āmmiyah, but that there are in fact several folk languages (luqät ‘āmmiyah). Moreover, each of these folk languages is said to be consist of shabby pieces, which refers to their ‘irregularity.’

44 In Arabic: ‘wa mā la-nā wa li-suran al-layl ‘idā tala’ subail.’

45 Brackets original. ‘Maḥṣūgah al-sawāb’ can also be read with a religious connotation: ‘the Straight Path’.
our research. For me he is only charged with suspicion, and suspicion in some cases is a sin.\textsuperscript{46} Since fast blame is not just, I say to the respected [Al-Mumkin] that I thank him for his effort. But I rebuke his opinion. I forward to him the advise not to restart (not every restart is laudable)\textsuperscript{47} by presenting us such an opinion that at least comprises an attack on the minds, because it is completely impossible. Therefore, diminishing the value of al-'arabiyah al-fus\textdhah by replacing it with a language that does not conform to its name ('\textdmt\textdhyah)\textsuperscript{48} except for that it is in all the regions conform in the narrowness of its rules and the lack of harmony without limitations and bounds.

[13] Concerning his statement that the situation is beyond repair\textsuperscript{49} and that our tongues are only fluent in [al-'\textdmt\textdhyah] ('alsunun\dha l\textdha ta\textcns\textdlatiq 'illa bi-\textdha). No excuse can be given to him [for this], as long as we see that the condition contrarily. Our indication is the newspapers, the printing houses and the schools. Unless he honors us a second time with an article that he pours in the mould of al-lu\textdha\textdghah al-'\textdmt\textdhyah so that we can see a sample\textsuperscript{51} of what he wants to make attractive in our eyes. Than we will have the best model. The merit is for the initiator even if the follower is good ...

[14] Those who are my supporters, who protect the honor of science and defend the sanctity of al-lu\textdha\textdghah al-'arabiyah al-fa\textdsh\textdha, I belong to their sanctuary. I will always obey them. Everybody has to undertake the defense of the honor of this noble language and to protect its sanctity, to defend its rights and the sanctum of its literature, resolutely and without fear for rebuke.

\textsuperscript{46} The phrase 'ba'd al-zann 'imn' is part of a Koranic verse in S\textdhrat al-\textdhs\textdaryâ (49:12).

\textsuperscript{47} Brackets original. This is a reference to the expression: 'al-'ibti\textdha d ma\textdhr\textdmbd wa al-'awd 'ahmad' (Initiating something is laudable, but re-starting is even more) (Kazimirsiki, 1860: 401).

\textsuperscript{48} Brackets original.

\textsuperscript{49} Literally the phrase 'inna al-\textdhr\textdq qad 'ittasa' 'al\textdha al-\textdhr\textdqi,' means 'the rent is wider than the patch.'

\textsuperscript{50} D\textdghir refers here to Al-Mumkin's statement: 'The Arabic that we suckle with the mother's milk and which is almost the only [language] our tongues speak fluently (al-'arabiyah alla\textdht narja\textdha\textdnh ma'a al-laban wa tak\textdha d alsunun\dha l\textdha ta\textcns\textdlatiq 'illa bi-\textdha)' (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 495 [4]).

\textsuperscript{51} The author uses the word 'ayni\textdhyah,' while the word that is normally used for sample is 'ay\textdynah.' This might be a printing mistake. It might also be a nineteenth-century neologism that did not survive.
[15] It is suitable for me to conclude my words with asking forgiveness from the respected *Al-Mumkin* if something inadvertently escaped me concerning him. Despite that his name is not known to me, he is older than me qua age and respect, and he is more precise in knowledge and understanding. But what gave me the courage to compete him by revealing his weakness and shortcomings is the secrecy of his name and the expression "your opponent is your equal." The clumsy woman will not wipe out a concubine.

Asʿad Dāḡīr

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52 Quotation marks original.
6. 'Mustaqbal al-luḍḥah al-‘arabiyyah. Naǧāḥ al-‘ummah al-‘arabiyyah fi luḍṭiḥah al-‘arabiyyah'  
(The future of the Arabic language. The success of the Arab community in and by means of its original language) 

Al-Mumkin, (March 1882, 618-621) 

[1] It has been said that the one who writes becomes a target. When I wrote my first letter I did only expect rebuke from those with a limited study of our Arabic language and its literature, who did not have the opportunity to examine the philosophy and the growth of language and who did not read the modern sciences by which the diwan of knowledge was overthrown in this century. But I expected to be proven wrong only by the citation of proofs of the unlikeliness of the second method of which I demonstrated the feasibility and of the likeliness of the third method, about which the intelligent writer, al-šayh Ḥārī Al-Yāziği said that "It is the most feasible in comparison to the first two methods, even though it is in itself almost unfeasible." The Damascene Literary Society opposed me in a respected letter that contained the following matters, which [follow] together with my opinion on them. 

[2] First, the superiority of the Arabs and Arabic. I do not dispute this and I did and do not deny it. There is no debate about this at all. Secondly, that the scholars wrote books on Arabic which can compete with the stars in number, and that they wrote in it [Arabic] on the sciences, crafts and arts what confuses the thoughts. I also do not dispute this. 

[3] Thirdly, that the lack of understanding of the 'āmmah of scientific books does not result from the lack of understanding of its vocabulary. This is a reaction on my statement "often I used to read our books to some craftsmen (industrial workers) and they did not understand well what I did not explain to them in the folk language." Even though I did not limit the books to scientific [books] and I did not intend scientific books, I do not see in the reaction something that proves that the craftsmen (industrial workers) would not understand science books better if they were written in the folk language. I ask the respected Literary Society and all the righteous people: 'What would you say if we wrote a book on tanning in the folk language and we wrote the same book in al-luḍḥah al-faṣṭḥah? Which one of 

53 Quotation marks original. See (Al-Yāziği, 1881: 404 [2]). 

54 Quotation marks original.
both would the laborers understand better? 52 If it is the first, then my statement is confirmed. If it is the second, then there is no need for the book that the intelligent Al-Hallil promised us. And not for the second book for the revivification of al-luğah al-faaṣiḥah that the respected president of the Benevolent Society to which the literary correspondent of Al-'Ahrām referred, started with.

[4] Fourthly, that I did not reflect on the article of Al-Hallil and that I asked “one of the commoners (‘āmmī min al-awāmm) to understand pre-Islamic poems.” 53 In answer to the first paragraph I say that this might be possible because of some distraction, [because of] weak understanding, or [because of] something God alone knows. How good would it be if it was clarified to me which matters I did not reflect on so that I can reconsider them. On the second [paragraph] [I say] that I did not ask one of the commoners (‘āmmī min al-awāmm), but rather “somebody of those who did not study the language well (wāhid min allaṣa‘na lam yadrūṣū al-luğah ḍayyīdan).” 54 Between the first and the latter is a big difference as is generally known.

[5] Fifthly, the definition of faṣāḥah by quoting a poem of Al-Ṣaft Al-Hillī and what Al-Muqtaṣaf quoted from the commentary on (ṣāriḥ) Al-miṣbāh. 55 Among what was said with respect to this [is] that strange words (al-kalimāt al-ġarība) are incompatible with faṣāḥah for us even if they were faṣāḥah for the people of that time (the time of the ḍāhilīyāh). 56 If this statement is confirmed, and I do not think that any of the rhetoricians would advocate it in support of us, than the words that are not strange (al-kalimāt gavr al-ġarība) are the faṣīḥah [words]. And that is sufficient for us. Let the righteous person examine the poetry of Al-Hillī, for I see it reveal the necessity to use the language that was current in his epoch (al-i’timād ‘alā al-luğah al-ṣā’i‘ah ft ‘aṣrīhā). Would you say that indeed he would maintain his belief if he were [to live] in our epoch?

52 Quotation marks mine.

53 Quotation marks original. See (Society, 1882a: 554 [5]).

54 Quotation marks original. See (Al-Munkin, 1882a: 494 [1]).

55 Note that Al-Munkin refers here to the commentary on (ṣāriḥ) Al-miṣbāh. Since he obviously refers to the same work as the Society, who referred to it as the commentary on (ṣāriḥ) Al-miṣbāh, and since Al-miṣbāh itself is a commentary on Al-miṣbāh, we can assume that he refers to Al-miṣbāh.

56 Brackets original. Al-ḡāhilīyah, which means literally “the time of ignorance,” is the most current term in Arabic to refer to the period before Islam.
[6] Sixthly, their disregard toward my statement that Arabic is a collection of the variants of the Arabs (al-'arabīyah maḡmāt luḡāt al-'arab), as if it does not support examination or does not have any force to confirm the second method, despite that it is the greatest proof for the feasibility of the unification of the folk language (ḥam luḡāt al-‘āmmah).

[7] Seventhly, that in Arabic there are innumerable books on all the sciences and arts, and that all the arts are ancient, and so on. God is great! God is great! Oh sirs, members of the Literary Society, do you not believe that only during the nineteenth century hundreds of sciences appeared for the first time, which have no name, nor sign in Arabic. If not for the lack of space and [fear for] deviation of the subject of the debate (munāẓarah), I would mention to you the names of most of these sciences and their subjects. But, I ask you one question. Does the government of Egypt (dawlāt miṣr), hoist of the lighthouse of the Arabic language, and her proud men and great scholars not know the value of the Arabic scientific, industrial and agricultural books? Why did it then go to trouble for the translation of scientific, industrial and agricultural books from French, while the trouble of translation and revision was tremendous, and their costs immense? Would it then not have been easier and better just to have printed the Arabic books and to have used them in [the governmental] schools? Do you not know that most books that the government of Egypt translated and printed since years are very few and that they became outdated now? So, it [the government] translated and composed other [books]. This is not unfamiliar to you. I only wanted to draw your attention to it. [Let me] relate to you a story that happened to me this year. Since three months I ordered a scientific book from Europe, printed in 1879. After a week I read in one of the scientific magazines that this book was reprinted once more (and this is the tenth [print]) in 1881. So I was bewildered. And now I want to sell it for half its price so that I can order a new copy. What do you say about the scientific books that were written in Arabic or were translated into it since thousand years? And this applies to most scientific books.

[8] Eighthly, that my claim "that it is possible to translate easily indispensable [books] to the folk language (luḡat al-‘āmmah) is a false claim" and the proof for this is "as you know."59

57 Note that Al-Mumkin cites the example of the Egyptian government as one of the main defenders of the Arabic language. This is a clear reference to the important developments that took place in Egypt in the domains of education, translation and the printing press, which I discussed in Chapter 2.

58 Round brackets original.

59 Quotation marks original. See (Society: 1882a: 555 [10]).
Sirs, members of the Literary Society, and those who are inclined to them. We are in reality on the side of opinion, but the welfare of the fatherland (ḥayr al-waṭan) is the orbit of our research. Your Benevolent Society, the founders of Al-Muqadimat and the great scholar Ibn Ḥaldūn before them believe from with heart that the language that we speak in this epoch (al-ḥaqīqa allātī natakallam bi-hā li-hādā al-ʿaṣr) is “an independent language, different from the language of Mudar (ḥurūf qāʿimah li-nafsihā muḥālifah li-ḥāfat muṣṭar),” meaning (ʿāyy) al-ʿarabīyah al-ḥuṣnīyah. It has been like this since hundreds of years. Even if [the spoken languages] differed from town to town, they are sufficient “to render the intended meaning and to express what is in the mind, and that is the meaning of ‘al-lisān’ or ‘al-ḥūf al-ḥurūf,” (language). The loss of inflection (iʿrāb) in it is not harmful.” And “The natural disposition/linguistic habit (malakah) of the Mudarī language (malakat al-lisān al-Mudarī) of this epoch has disappeared and has been corrupted. The language of this complete generation (luqāt hādī al-ghayl kullihim) is different from the language of Mudar (luqāt mudar), in which the Koran was revealed.”

“Since languages were natural dispositions/linguistic habits (malakāt), acquiring them is possible, as is the case [with] other natural dispositions/habits (malakāt). The method of instructing it to the one who desires to acquire this natural disposition/habit (malakah) is that he starts to memorize their ancient speech of which their styles is in accordance with that of the Koran, the Hadith, the speech of the forefathers and the speeches of the prominent Arabs (fiḥājī al-ʿarabī) in their rhyming prose and poetry.” And other conditions that Ibn Ḥaldūn mentioned in his ‘Introduction’ (Muqaddimmat athār) and on which he worked half his life. And I, may God be my witness, I studied Arabic from the greatest masters in Arabic and I

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60 Quotation marks original. The quotes are from ‘Al-Muqaddimmat’ written by Ibn Ḥaldūn. For an English translation, see also Rosenthal’s translation: ‘The language of the sedentary and urban population is an independent language different from the language of the Mudar’ (Rosenthal, 1967 (3): 351).

61 Quotation marks mine.

62 Quotation marks original.

63 Quotation marks original.

64 Quotation marks original. This is probably the paragraph which Rosenthal translates as follows: ‘However, since languages are habits, as mentioned before, it is possible to learn them like any other habit. The obvious method of instruction for those who desire to obtain the habit of the ancient (Mudarī) language is to acquire expert knowledge of the linguistic documents (written) in it, such as the Qurʾān, the traditions, the speeches in rhymed prose and verse of the ancients’ (Rosenthal, 1967 (3): 353).

65 Quotation marks mine.
studied what God bestowed on me of his benevolence from the sciences on language and other sciences. Yesterday I was reading an ancient book and I became very tired before I understood the meaning of one of its chapters. Not because of the strangeness of its subject, because it was very basic for me, but rather because of the strange way of expression in the book and because of its distance from our familiar books. I am distressed that I was not born in ḇabal Al-Nuṣayr so that I would have the natural disposition/linguistic habit in the Arabic of Mudar (‘arabīyat muḍar) without any burden or trouble. This with respect to understanding the correct language (al-luqah al-ṣāḥīḥah). But concerning writing in it, there is the greatest difficulty. Where are the writers [who write] in correct Arabic (al-‘arabīyah al-ṣāḥīḥah)? How few they are! To what can we relate this? Is it not because they did not study Arabic in the same way as the Westerners study their languages? (kamā yadrus al-‘afran ḍ uḡāthāhim). But our case is that of who studied a foreign language (luqah ‘aḡnabīyah) in order to write it. Or even, some of those who learned a foreign language from the people of our region/lands (luqah ‘aḡnabīyah min ‘aḥūl bilaḏina), such as Turkish (al-luqah al-turkīyah), or French (al-luqah al-faransawīyah), write it more correctly than they write Arabic. So let us not find the truth burdensome, even though it is against us, because the examination of the illness is a duty before the description of it.

[9] ‘The impossibility of Al-Munkin if it were possible’

This respected article contains two issues:

First, the differentiation of the folk languages (‘iḥtīlāf luqāt al-‘āmmah) and [that] this makes it impossible to unify and refine/revise them (ḡam ‘uḥa wa taḥṣīthuha). The answer on this is that I accept the introduction on this (not completely as it was rendered), but I do not accept the result, because the difficulty of something does not mean that it is impossible, especially since this took place in several languages of the world. The person who denies this must read the history of languages or has to ask for proof.

Secondly, the unsuitability of the folk language (luqat al-‘āmmah) to be a writing language (luqat al-kitābah) and the following beautiful description of the folk language (luqat al-‘āmmah) such as “ḥarīghah (confined), samīghah (disgusting), laḡw (ungrammatical language use), haḏayān (senseless jabber).” This is what we do not accept at all from him, since the testimony of Ibn Ḥaldaṯ, the imam of the scholars, was just mentioned. When the understanding person reflects, he accepts his statement, if he sees that the folk language (luqat al-‘āmmah) is appropriate for

66 Quotation marks mine. What follows is Al-Munkin’s reaction on Dāǧir’s article.

67 Quotation marks original. See (Dāǧir, 1882: 558 [8], [9]).
all our purposes and it is very eloquent. It is rare that there are good rhetoric qualities which it does not have.

[10] All dear readers of Al-Muqtaṣaf, if our language that we speak (luḡatunā allatī natakallam bi-hā) is different from al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah and if it is appropriate for our purposes, and if studying and acquiring the natural disposition/linguistic habit (malakah) of al-luḡah al-faṣīḥah takes from us a lot of studying and a long time, why then do we not refine/revise our language ('alā ma la nukhadīb luḡatana)? Why is this not possible for us as it was possible for other communities whose languages changed (al-ʿumam allaḏīn taqayyarat luḡātumum)? I do not deny that before we can unify and refine/revise the folk language we have to do the impossible. The only thing we need is two, three, ten or hundred [?] But to make the correct Arabic (al-ʿarabīyah al-ṣaḥīḥah) a natural disposition/linguistic habit (malakah) to the present generation requires that everybody, old and young, toils very hard, as Ibn Ḥalūdūn mentioned. Despite all this, we are on the side of opinion and examination. The truth will appear from the void. The Benevolent Society of Damascus started with the simplification of applying the third solution. Hopefully it also starts to use it, because returning to correct Arabic (al-ʿarabīyah al-ṣaḥīḥah) is not impossible, even though I consider it more difficult than refining/revising the folk language (tahdīb luḡat al-ʿummah), in analogy with the languages of other communities (luḡāt gairinā min al-ʿumam). The aim of both sides is to spread science and the welfare of the fatherland and the nation (ḥayr al-waṭan wa al-ʿummah).

[11] Note: a mistake occurred in the printing of my first article. Among which the omission of the word ṣaʿb (difficult) in the sixth line from below on page 494 after "wa al-maḡribīyīn" (and the Maghribians). The addition of the letter 'l' to the word yaʿtamid (to use) in the third line on page 495 and the correct is without 'l'. The omission of the word ʿamal (unification) in the second line on page 496 after the word amkana (to be possible).

*Al-Mumkin*

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60 This sentence is not completely clear to me, since Al-Mumkin does not specify of what 'two, three, ten or hundred' are needed. It seems as if a word was skipped from it.

69 Quotation marks mine.

70 Quotation marks original.
7. 'Kašf al-şatā' 'ammā fi kalām al-mumkin mīn al-şatā''
(Uncovering of the mistakes in Al-Mumkin's statements)

H.H., (April 1882, 690-694)

[1] The one who writes becomes a target. If he writes well then the minds will incline toward him. If he writes badly then he will be struck with the arrows of rebuke and reproach. The two respected editors of Al-Muqṭaf proposed to the writers and intellectuals to expound a method that facilitates the unification of the language of speech and the writing [language]. One of the eminent writers embarked upon this and he hit the mark and he solved the puzzle. The other writers applauded him in delight, which is the case when somebody says the right thing. An eminent person who studied Arabic from its greatest masters and who mastered the ancient and the modern sciences took the initiative to oppose him. He observed its crisis and he wanted to arouse the thoughts to a question, which kept me sleepless at night. The Literary Society criticized it with clear insight and vision so that [the question] became clear and that the level of the one who presented it became manifest to the people. He resisted once more, claiming that the criticized the above-mentioned Society on eight issues that its letter comprised. I took the initiative to react to it by what they confirmed in that article. Even if he makes me one of those who have had a limited study of the Arabic language and its literature and who did not have the opportunity to examine the philosophy of language and who did not read the modern contemporary sciences, since he only expects rebuke of [such people] and that a disagreement with his statement would only originate from them. I will mention his statement followed by the reaction and critique on it that occurred to me.

[2] The eminent Al-Mumkin said firstly: 'the superiority of the Arabs and Arabic. I do not dispute it on this and I did and do not deny it. There is no debate about this at all.'

I say that the Society mentioned this as an introduction in order to present the proofs it presented. It is generally known that what is mentioned as an introduction is not a controversial matter. If it were a controversial matter, then it is not permissible to make it an introduction. His perception that the Society wrongly thinks that he denies and disputes it is either [based on] a disregard for the meaning

71 The author refers polemically to Al-Mumkin's assertion that he studied Arabic from the greatest specialists. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 620 [8]).

72 Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 618 [2]).
of introduction or pure deceit. Either his claim that there is no debate about this at all is mukābahah, since this is an important point of departure (madhal 'aẓīm) in this research. If not for the certainty about of the superiority of the Arabs and Arabic, they [Al-Mumkin's opponents] would not dispute him [Al-Mumkin] for his opinion to replace [al-faṣṭḥah] with al-šuqah al-‘āmmiyah. Rather, their minds would [even] not reject its replacement with [a language] like the Circassian or the Albanian language. Moreover, this manner has been mentioned in the domain of debating (fann al-munāẓarah) and is called tanwīr al-sanaad. How excellent is the writer who opposes a statement on which proof is built!

[3] The eminent Al-Mumkin said, secondly, that 'the scholars wrote books on Arabic which can compete with the stars in number, and that they also wrote in it [Arabic] on the sciences, crafts and arts what confuses the thoughts. I also do not dispute this.'

I say, the previous answer itself is the answer on this [claim]. Except that here there is something else. Namely, that if he does not dispute this explicitly, he disputes it implicitly, because the method he preferred leads to the obliteration of these books in their totality, because their translation into the folk language (al-šuqah al-‘āmmiyah) is more out of reach than the stars. This indicates literally that he refutes it.

[4] The eminent Al-Mumkin said, thirdly, that 'the lack of understanding of the common people (al-‘āmmah) of scientific books does not result from the lack of understanding its vocabulary. This is a reaction on my statement often I used to read our books to some craftsmen (industrial workers) and they did not understand well... and so on.

I say that his claim that he did not limit the books to scientific [books] is an obvious mistake. He mentioned in his first article what I quote here: 'it must have escaped the respected [Al-Yāziḥr] that if the common people (al-‘āmmah) understand books with epic stories, they do not necessarily understand science books.' He stated this clearly on several places and maybe he forgot his previous statement. Concerning his statement 'I ask the respected Literary Society and all the righteous people: 'What would you say if we wrote a book on tanning in the

73 Mukābahah was defined in Al-Muqṭatāf as 'to dispute the opponent after knowing the wrongness of his own statement and the soundness of the statement of his opponent' (Al-Muqṭatāf, 1881: 358).

74 Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 618 [2]).

75 Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [3]).

76 Quotation marks original. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882a: 494 [1]).
folk language, and so on.\(^{77}\) The answer on this is that, after proving [the possibility] of regulating the grammatical rules of the folk language (dā'īt qawāid al-luqāḥ al-‘āmmīyyah) and the easiness of writing and reading it (suḥūlat al-kitāb bi-hā wa al-qirā‘ah), and this is one of the disputed matters, (if he wishes),\(^{78}\) he has to write a book on taming in the folk language (luqat al-‘āmmal) and to examine its speakers in order to clarify the matter.

\[5\] The eminent Al-Mumkin said, fourthly ‘that I did not reflect on the article of Al-Ḥalīl,\(^{79}\) and so on.

I say, what Al-Mumkin did not reflect on is the statement of Al-Ḥalīl in which he believed ‘that the barrier between language and [the understanding of] meaning is not on the part of the language, but rather on the part of the language users,\(^{80}\) until he states ‘and they asked one of them “What is eloquence (balāqah)?” And he said: “It is what the common people (al-‘āmmal) understand and what the elite (al-ḥāṣṣah) approve of.”’\(^{81}\) This statement refers to the necessity of avoiding words that are strange for the commoners (al-‘awāmm) in books that have the aim to benefit them as well. If he had reflected on this, he would not have asked a commoner (‘āmmīl) to understand pre-Islamic poems, which contain words that are strange for many of the elite persons (al-ḥawāṭṣ) of this epoch, in addition to the commoners (‘awāmm). It is obvious that not reflecting on this results from distraction. God forbid that the Literary Society attributes weak understanding to an eminent person who studied Arabic from the most famous authorities [on language] and who acquired the ancient and the modern sciences. Concerning the fact that he only asked one of those who did not study the language well to understand a pre-Islamic poem and to explain the meaning of every word and expression in it. This is indisputable, except that this does not benefit him at all, since language is one of the transmitted sciences, of which the issues can only be studied from a book or a teacher, since the mind has no opportunity to know them [by its own]. It is generally known that somebody who did not study the language well, is a commoner (‘āmmīl) in relation to what he did not study. As such, the statement of the Society is irreproachable.

\(^{77}\) Quotation marks original. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [3]).

\(^{78}\) Brackets original.

\(^{79}\) Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [4]).

\(^{80}\) Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Yazıği, 1881: 404 [3]).

\(^{81}\) Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Yazıği, 1881: 405 [4]).
[6] The eminent Al-Mumkin said, fifthly: ‘the definition of fasāḥah by quoting a poem of Al-Ṣaḥīf Al-Ḥillī and what Al-Muqtataf quoted,’\textsuperscript{82} and so on. I say, he [Al-Qazwīnī] said in Tallhīs al-miṣfāḥ\textsuperscript{83} and this is the most famous work on rhetoric. Fasāḥah characterizes a single word (al-mufrad), speech/language use (al-kalām) and the speaker (al-mutakallim). Balāgah characterizes only the latter two (namely speech and the speaker). Fasāḥah of the single word means that it is free from discord of letters, oddness and deviation from analogy. Discord (al-tanāḏfūr) is like ‘gaddā’iruḥu mustardūrat ‘ilī al-‘alā’\textsuperscript{84} (his braids are twisted upwards)\textsuperscript{85} Strangeness (al-ğarābāh) is like jāhiban mursan musriğan,\textsuperscript{86} meaning as the sword qua preciseness and straightness and as a lamp to the lightening. And deviation (al-muḥālafah) is like ‘al-ḥamdu li-llāh al-‘alā’ al-aqlal.’ It is said that it is hateful for the hearing such as ‘karīm al-ğirīsīsāh’ but there is discussion about this. [Fasāḥah of] speech means that it is free of weak composition, discord between words and complexity, despite of its eloquence (ma’a fasāḥāthāh).\textsuperscript{87} This statement is unambiguous: the scholars of rhetoric say that using strange Arabic words (al-kalīmāt al-‘arābiyyah al-ğarībāh) is incompatible with fasāḥah, because the hearer does not benefit from it. Since strangeness (al-ğarābāh) is relative (nisbīf) because something can be strange for a group of people or for a person, while it is not for another group of people or person. Thus, if strange Arabic words are used to address someone who does not understand them, then they are not eloquent (fasīḥah). If they are used to address someone who understands them, then they are eloquent (kānat fasīḥah). This invalidates his [Al-Mumkin’s] statement: ‘and I do not think that any of the rhetoricians would advocate it.’\textsuperscript{88} This statement is also unambiguous: the folk language (lugāt al-‘āmmah) is not eloquent (fasīḥah) for the scholars of rhetoric.

\textsuperscript{82} Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [5]).

\textsuperscript{83} Tallhīs al-miṣfāḥ’ was written by Qalāl al-dīn al-Qazwīnī, the Ḥarīb of Damascus (666-739/1267-1338). It was a commentary on ‘Miṣfāḥ al-‘ulām’ written by Al-Sakkātī (Bonebakker, 1978: 863-864). Another famous work of Al-Qazwīnī is ‘Īdāh fi ‘ulām al-balāgah,’ which is an expanded version of the former. (Heinrichs, 1995: 894) For a summary of Al-Qazwīnī’s concept of fasāḥah and balāgah, see also Von Grunebaum’s article ‘Fasāḥah’ in the Encyclopaedia of Islam. (Lecerf, 1965: 824-827).

\textsuperscript{84} Quotation marks mine.

\textsuperscript{85} Brackets mine.

\textsuperscript{86} Quotation marks mine.

\textsuperscript{87} Double quotation marks original.

\textsuperscript{88} Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [5]).
because of its enormous deviation from analogy (qiṣṣaṣ) [with al-faṣḥāḥ]. If he doubts anything of this he has to check this book and the commentaries [on it].

[7] Concerning his claim that the statement of Al-Ṣaḥṣi reveals 'the necessity to use the language that was current in his epoch (al-'i̇timā́d 'alá al-luqāḥ al-ṣa'ī̇ ah fi 'aṣrī̇ ṭ).’ 89 It is groundless because Al-Ṣaḥṣi Al-Ḥillī was a contemporary to the great scholar Ibn Ḥāḍir. Ibn Ḥāḍir stated that “The natural disposition/linguistic habit of the urban language (malakat al-lisān al-ḥadār)’ 90 of this epoch has disappeared and has been corrupted (daḥābat wa ṣaṣṣādat). The language of this complete generation is different from the language of Muḍṣar, in which the Koran was revealed.” 91 Al-Ṣaḥṣi Al-Ḥillī only wrote in the language of Muḍṣar as his writings testify. If his opinion was that of the eminent Al-Mumkin then he would have written in the language that was current in his epoch (al-luqāḥ al-ṣa'ī̇ ah fi 'aṣrī̇ ṭ). We took the inconsistency in this statement as an indication of his skillfulness in Arabic, as is plain for somebody who studied Arabic from its most insignificant masters! 92

[8] The eminent Al-Mumkin said, sixthly, ‘disregard toward my statement that Arabic is a collection of the variants (luqāḥ) of the Arabs, as if it does not support examination,’ and so on.

I say, this is strikingly astonishing. The Literary Society, even if it disregarded it because of the disagreement about this among scholars, it accepted it for the sake of argument and it asserted, on the premise of accepting it, that this would not benefit the opponent because of the lack of instigation for this and the lack of fulfillment of the requirements. Because the different variants of the Arabs were unified by a religious and political incentive (li-‘anna luqāḥ al-‘arab al-muḥtasib ‘ummadā ḍama‘ahā bā’īt dīnī wa stiyāṣī), if it is confirmed that it is a collective of several variants (maṣṭama‘ah min ‘iddat luqāḥ)! But [for] the folk language (luqāt al-‘āmmah) there is no incentive for its unification (li-ḍam‘ahā), since the Aleppo does not see the necessity of giving preponderance to the language of the Damascene, in addition to the Iraqi for instance. Neither does he see the necessity

89 Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [5]).

90 Note that H.H. refers again to 'al-lisān al-ḥadār’ instead of 'al-lisān al-μuḍṣar.’

91 Double quotation marks original. This quote could not be found in Al-Muqaddimah as such. For further discussion see Chapter 6.

92 This is a polemical reference to Al-Mumkin’s claim that he studied Arabic from the greatest masters of Arabic.

93 Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [6]).
of mixing his language, which he suckled with the milk of his childhood (luqatahu allata 'irtada'ahā ma'a libān al-sibā) with the language of another. In contrast to when it is asked from him to replace [his language] with the Mu'arī language (al-luqah al-mu'ar'iyah), of which he thinks that it is the noblest language ('aṣref al-luqāt) and that it is one of the means for [obtaining] his happiness. He would not hesitate [to do this] if it were possible, even with great efforts and spending money, in addition that he considers this easy and easy to achieve. This clearly demonstrates that the Society substantiated its claim, on the premise that it is proved that the language used by the Arabs is a collection of variants (luqat al-'arab al-musta'malah maqma' luqāt).

[9] The eminent Al-Mumkin said, seventhly, ‘in Arabic there are innumerable books on all the sciences and arts,"" and so on. I say, who reads the books on the scientific subjects written in the Arabic language, notices that their writers divided the sciences in a rational way, moving between negation and confirmation. There is no case that was anciently or recently discovered which was not entered in the subject of one of the arts that they mentioned in the division [of the sciences]. If not for the lack of space and [fear for] deviating from the subject of the debate, as the respected Al-Mumkin excused himself, I would mention this. Due to the fact that the Literary Society mentioned in their article what I quote [here]: “We do not deny that the additions which they added (namely the modern scholars) are important additions which the professionals are required to know. The method to realize this is their translation into the original language (al-luqah al-'aṣlīyah), which has] precise grammatical rules, using familiar words in usage, which the elite (al-hāssah) approve of and which the common people (al-'āmmah) are acquainted with.” His statement is strikingly astonishing. “But, I ask you one question. Does the government of Egypt, boist of the lighthouse of the Arabic language, and her proud men and great scholars not know the value of the Arabic scientific, industrial and agricultural books? Why did it then go to trouble for the translation of scientific, industrial and agricultural books from French, while the trouble of translation and revision was tremendous, and their costs immense?” I think that this question results from not closely reading the statement of the Society because of a distraction. However, what his statement imparts is that it is necessary in this epoch not to search the

94 Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [7]).

95 Brackets original. They were added by H.H.

96 Quotation marks original. See (Society, 1882a: 555 [9]).

97 Quotation marks original. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [7]).
books of the predecessors and their [the Western books'] translation. But the matter is the contrary. I think that Monsieur Tiers and most other scholars of France do not share his idea.

[10] The excellent Al-Mumkin said, eighthly, ‘my claim “that it is possible to translate easily indispensable [books] to the folk language (luğat al-‘āmmah) is a false claim” and the proof for this is “as you know”,’ 98

I say, I did not understand the issue of this statement. Maybe he wanted that the Society did not refer to the proof. The case is that it mentioned that what is written in the folk language is hard to understand. Thus, books that are written in the way that [the folk language] is pronounced are mostly similar to [what is written in] the Cireassian language. Due to the fact that he reported that the natural disposition/linguistic habit of the urban language (malakat al-līsān al-ḥaḍārī) has disappeared and became corrupted since a long time, I wished that he reported [also] about one of the scholars, from the moment of its corruption until now, who shared the approval of the use of the folk language instead of the Muḍarī language in writing and composition. This noble idea is maybe a talent that is specific to the respected Al-Mumkin. This is a grace of God, who bestows upon whom He chooses! Concerning his regret of not being born on Ġabal Nuṣayrīyyah in order to have the natural disposition/linguistic habit of the Arabic of Muḍar (malakah bi-‘arabīyat muḍar) without effort and without problems. This does not occur in the article of the Society. What had to be mentioned and would have been adequate [to be mentioned] is that he is sorry for the time he lost in the study of the Arabic language, since yesterday he was reading an ancient book and he became very tired before he understood its meaning. Not because of the strangeness of its subject, because it was very basic for him. (May God give him the profit of it) 99, but rather because of the strangeness of the expression of the book. Here we tighten the rein of the pen (na’ḥuḍ min ‘inān al-qalam), asking his forgiveness since this is among the requisites of the generous people.

98 Quotation marks mine. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882b: 619 [8]). H.H. omitted the double quotation marks used by Al-Mumkin. I added them anew.

99 Brackets original.
8. *'Nağāh al-'ummah al-'arabīyah fī luğatihā al-'aṣlīyah'*
(The success of the Arab community in and by means of its original language)

*Mīrit Qandalaft, (April 1882, 694-696)*

[1] The scope of this debate is for the sincere patriot (*al-waṭanī al-saft*) nothing but an occasion to present his opinions and to manifest his wishes. So let everybody express his opinion, without uttering reproof, without complaining out of boredom. Do not hope for, except this dispute, something else than difference of opinion and controversy. A void opinion of a righteous and earnestly concerned person, which he proposes to those who share it with him: we will invalidate its proof and proof its invalidity in the interest of serving the truth. The last words that are in the heart of the wise person is: “This is not more than a playground for children and a scene for juveniles. I do not pasture my female and male camels on it for my opinion (lā 'asrah fī-hī li-ra'yī nāqatan wa lā ḡamalan). I do not write a paragraph on the paper, since my statement will not be fruitful in practice.”

[2] I do not charge our friend *Al-Mumkin* with bad thoughts and I do not direct the slightest reproach to him. Neither do I seek to discover hidden truths or intentions. I entrust this to the Omniscient, who knows the invisible secrets and what is hidden in the hearts (‘allām al-guyāb wa fāhiš al-qulūb). I adhere to manifest evidence (*al-šahādah wa al-mu’ānāt*). We are a group of Easterners in a time of freedom (*ma’ṣar al-ṣarqīyyīn fī ‘asr ḍarīyīh*), which invites us to plants its [the freedom’s] branches in the soil of affection, to irrigate it with the water of sincerity and to let it ripen in the sun of science, about which we are proud to say that this brilliant journal [*Al-Muqataṭaf*] is the point of ascend of its light and the seat of its secrets. We know that this discussion is a fashion show of facts. In it [this discussion], the kohl becomes not indispensable to us [just] by making up the eyes with kohl. The products of stuffing and embellishment do not sell well to us.

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100 Quotation marks mine. This is a metaphorical way of saying that for the real nationalist (*al-waṭanī al-saft*) the debate is not of great importance, but only a mere exchange of opinions, a playground for children. The expression ‘lā 'asrah fī-hī nāqatan wa lā ḡamalan’ is often used to say ‘it is none of my business’ or ‘I have no interest in this matter.’

101 The author probably means that the appearances of an argument are no substitute for substantial proof.
This is a refutation of what I saw in the opinion of the respected Al-Mumkin. I implore him to condone this reaction on its [Al-Mumkin's opinion] fundament. I do not consider him [as someone who is] not affected by the soundness of critique on its meaning. So I say. If we adhere in our debate to the law investigation (qânân al-bâhût), we have to return to the same subject and to look at the proofs [that sustain] our point of view and [those that sustain] our refutation. Until the moment that this becomes feasible for us, we do not need to mention some difficulties which some of his [Al-Mumkin's] mentioned [already].

[3] The respected Al-Mumkin supported his claim of the precedence of the revision of the folk language and its use with two arguments. (1) The lack of understanding by the common people (al-‘âmmah) of scientific books written in al-luqâh al-fašîhah. (2) The attestation [in favor of] the feasibility of this change with the change that some communities ('umam) made in their languages.

[4] We react on the first [argument] that the lack of understanding by the common people (‘âmmah) of these books does not result from the essence of language (diat al-luqâh), but rather from the lack of a writing style (naqâs ’uslâb al-ta‘llîf). Together with many of our sirs, the excellent researchers among the Arabs and non-Arabs, we believe that if this style was taken as a rule in our scientific and industrial books, by selecting the current words (bi-‘intiqâ al-mutadâwâl min al-‘alîfâz) and using familiar expressions (‘isti’mâl al-ma’nâs min al-ta‘bir), by a good division (‘iğâdat al-taqsmîn), presentation in a logical order (al-ta’stîl), explanation (al-bast), and clarification (al-‘iddâh), and if in the reading the preparedness to receive the wanted field is taken into consideration, then there remains no aspect for complaint or rebuke. This differs from the one that said that the reading of a discipline does not depend on the understanding of the vocabulary but rather on theoretical issues that can be learned from the revelation of the professor. This is because it is possible to explain these theoretical issues in the

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102 In the Arabic text ‘mabrâhu is mentioned. Probably this is a printing mistake for ‘mabnâhu,’ which means ‘fundament,’ or ‘basis.’

103 Brackets and numbering original.

104 The Arabic phrase 'bi-‘intiqâ al-mutadâwâl min al-‘alîfâz’ can lead to different interpretations. ‘Mutadâwâl’ can mean both ‘current, circulating, prevailing, in common use’ and extension ‘kalâm mutadâwâl’ can be also translated as ‘colloquial use’ (Wehr, 1980: 302). As such, it is not clear whether Qandalaft means by ‘al-mutadâwâl min al-‘alîfâz’, fašîhah words that are very currently used (so that also the ‘âmmah can understand them), or colloquial words that can be ‘elevated’ or ‘purified.’ ‘‘Intiqâ’’ is derived from the root n-q-y, which means pure. It can mean ‘to purify’ or ‘to select.’ The phrase can then mean ‘by selecting the current words’ or ‘by purifying the colloquial words.’
writing [itself]. This is a requisite of good writing, according to what we observed in the books of the Westerners, in addition to the attestation of Al-Muqtaṣaf and the recently written Arabic writings that appear (like ‘First lessons in natural philosophy’)\(^{105}\) and what the scientific articles of the respected Al-Muqtaṣaf testify of. The preferable for most [people] is that, if the intellectuals adhere to the basic principles of writing, among which are proficiency in natural ordering of scientific reports, by putting limits, introductions, terminology, and by the systematic arrangement into chapters, the analysis of the problem, the clarification of the abstruse, the explanation of the expression, and so on, in such a manner that the writer has mercy with the student, there remains no need for the explanation of the professor, except for a bit. As such, the proficient reader can learn a lot of the literary, scientific and other disciplines, if he has made up his mind to this and is firmly decided, and adheres to it and if he puts the elements together in order to learn. If the conditions of writing are fulfilled for the student, then he can learn what he needs from the canon of language and read gradually the sciences, from, for instance, arithmetics to algebra, to engineering and what follows them. The books of the basic principles of engineering are the most convincing and clear proof for us in our case. Despite that it (namely, engineering)\(^{106}\) is among the highest of the rational arts and the most tiring for the mind, because of the long analogies and the abundance of the sources, in the comprehension of its cases it does not depend on intellectual position (mawqif), because the writing on it adheres to the required natural style mentioned above. So the eminence of an art does not find itself caused by the language, but rather it often seeks help from it in order to surmount its difficulties and to solve its problems.

[5] Concerning the denial by the respected Al-Mumkin of the Literary Society and the commentator on (Ṣāriḥ) Al-miṣbāh in their definition of faṣāḥah and balāḡah and his suspicion to consent with the scholars of rhetoric (namely) that strange words (al-kalimat al-ṣarīḥah) are incompatible to faṣāḥah for us, even if they were faṣīḥah for the people of that epoch).\(^{107}\) We answer him. (1)\(^{108}\) The definition which was communicated by Al-Muqtaṣaf is unanimously agreed upon by those rhetoric scholars we know, such as the commentator on (Ṣāriḥ) Al-miṣbāh, which is

\(^{105}\) Brackets original, quotation marks mine.

\(^{106}\) Brackets original.

\(^{107}\) Brackets original.

\(^{108}\) Brackets and numbering original.
the most famous, and Ibn Al-'Afrî, the authority in the discipline of the art of composition. (2) The statement on those strange words (al-kalîmât al-ğarîbah) was confirmed, elucidating this, by the very erudite authority in Al-muqâl as-sâ'ir and here is some support for both issues. He said in the chapter of the definition of fasâhah and balâqah what he stipulated: "Eloquent speech (al-kalâm al-faṣîh) is what is clear and obvious (al-zâhîr al-bayîn). This means that its words are [directly] understood and its understanding does not need to be derived from a language book (kitâb al-luqâh). They [the words] only have this characteristic because they are familiar in usage among the lords of poetry and prose and current in their speech (ma'âlîf al-îstî'mâl bayn 'arbâb al-naṣîm wa al-naṣîr dâ'îrah fî kalâmihim). They are only familiar in usage and current in speech, excluding the other words because of the position/importance of their superiority (li-makân husnîhâd). This is because the lords of poetry and prose sieved the language by considering its words. They probed, divided and chose beauty among the words and they used them, and they refused ugliness and they did not use them." On obsolete language use and strange words he said the following: "Words can be divided into three classes, of which two are beautiful and one is ugly. Of the two beautiful classes, one, its first and later usage is current from the ancient time until our epoch, and it is not called obsolete (waḥshî). The other, its first usage is current, but not its other and its usage differs from epoch and its people, and that is what is not bad to use for the Arabs because for them it was not obsolete, but for us it is obsolete." This writing is completely unambiguous. It dismisses the doubt/suspicion of our opponent and it supports what the Literary Society mentioned and what the respected Al-Muqataf quoted. Nevertheless, our opponent cannot be blamed for his doubt about the definition of fasâhah and balâqah and what we said about strange words (al-kalîmât al-ğarîbah) because it appears that this primary question in rhetoric was not presented to him during his study with the greatest masters of the Arabic language.

[6] (2) Concerning his reasoning that it is possible to refine the folk language (tahâdîb luqât al-Âmmah) in the way as some communities did with their languages

109 Diya' al-dîn Nasr Allah 'Ibn Al-'Afrî (1162-1239). His most important work was 'Al-muqâl al-sâ'ir fî 'udab al-kāthîb wa al-sâ'ir,' Rosenthal mentions that 1163 was the year in which 'Ibn Al-'Afrî was born (Rosenthal, 1971: 724-725).

110 Quotation marks original.

111 Quotation marks original.

112 This is again a polemical reference to Al-Mumkin's statement that he studied with the greatest authorities on the Arabic language. See (Al-Mumkin, 1882: 620 [8]).

113 Brackets and numbering original.
(bi-mā faʿalat baʿd al-ʿumam fi lugātihim); after examining it, we do not consider it adequate for what it is aimed at. The one who denies the possibility does not [necessarily] deny that it is possible in general (and the ratio is guidance), [but] because it is an accepted evidence (al-musallam al-badīh) that it is possible that the human being does [things] that harm him, out of ignorance or foolishness and that God condemns a complete community (ʿummaḥ bi-ʿasrīhā) to humiliation. Its governors and its advisors convince it [the community] of a matter that moves them into the abyss of humility and the lowest levels of decline. It is most obvious that the claim of who stated the impossibility of this possible is relative and built on [the idea] that (the possible that is harmful is impossible qua benefit.) What becomes clear to us is that the comparison between the Arabs and their language with these communities and their languages is incomplete and deficient (qiyyās al-ʿarab wa lugātihim ala hadāk al-ʿumam wa lugātihim naqīṣ manqād). Because their change was because of political motives (dawāʿin siyāsīyah), such as the invasion of Northern European tribes (qabīl al-šimāl al-ʿarabī) against the Romans (al-ṣūmānīyah) and their mixing with them (iḥṭilāṭuhum bi-him). So their original language [became] corrupted among the folk people and it became a mixture of different languages (bi-hayt afṣadāt al-luḡāh al-ʿasīliyah inā al-ʿāmmah fa-ʿaṣbahat mazīgan min luḡāt muḥtaliyah) which is hard to decompose and of which the roots are hard to diffuse/generalize. But our language (luḡātunā) was not overcome by what happened to these [languages], thank God, and it did not arrive to this bad situation. If someone answered that the language of the Greeks, for instance, deviates from what we said, then we ask him what is the proof against the possibility of the general spread of classical Greek, if the decision makers aspire to this and start to publish classical works and to start using it in the schools, as the speakers of Arabic (ʿahl al-ʿarabīyah) want to now. If he answered against this that the means to do this were not available in ancient times, we say that they are available now to us in this epoch, thanks to the Benefactor. We only need determined minds and determined wills that proceed and feet that are planted in the demands of each useful discipline. We only need unified hearts and hands helping each other to spread science and the extension of its scope among the elite and the common people (našr al-ʿilm wa tawsīʿīh bayna al-ṭāṣṣ wa al-ʿamm). If we neglect the benefaction by our restraint and reject it by our negligence, we are like the hungry who refuses bread or the sick who hates the medicine.

Mitrī Qandalaft

114 Brackets original.
9. 'Nağāḥ al-‘ummah al-‘arabīyah fī lugatihā al-‘ašīyah'  
(The success of the Arab community in and by means of its original language),

The Damascene Literary Society, (April 1882, 697)

[1] We have written what we have written on this subject to clarify the reality of the situation, following the requirements of a debate (munaẓarah), not a dispute (ġidāl). Due to that what the respected writer Al-Munkin wrote in the second article qua critique on us in eight points, the reaction to him appears from our [first] article without lie. This contents us, hoping that the eyesight returns twice. Maybe repetition has its influence and will the truth become clear to him as the appearance of the sun in the middle of the day.

The Damascene Literary Society
10. ‘Mustaqbal al-luğah al-‘arabīyah’
(The future of the Arabic language)

Al-Mumkin (June 1882, 42-44)

[1] I received the eleventh issue of the respected Al-Muqtataf in which two reactions [featured]. I do not see a reason to answer on the first [one], because I do not intend in this debate to silence the participants in it with arguments, but rather to convince the reading public. I will consent with their judgement, whatever it is. Concerning the second reaction, its writer confirmed in its first part what does not contradict me. If he were a little indulgent, then he would say that if the scientific and industrial books were written in the folk language (luğat al-‘āmmah), they would be more comprehensible. Thereupon he turned to the question of fasāḥah. I wanted to condone it, equally consenting with the judgement of the readers, if not for his misleading use of the attestation by Ibn ‘Aţf and if not for his accusation of that I would have neglected a primary question in rhetoric. So, supporting my previous statements and defending the sacrosanctity of Arabic, about which I do not speak haphazardly, I say [the following]:

[2] Firstly, I did not see anyone who considered Ibn ‘Aţf, the writer of Al-maţal al-sā’ir, to belong to the scholars of rhetoric. The one who denies this has to refer to his biography. So quoting him here is misplaced.

Secondly, I do not deny the definition of fasāḥah which was quoted by Al-Muqtataf from Al-Şirāżī,15 because the phrase of Al-Şirāżī quoted by Al-Muqtataf is the following: “I saw a group of claimants of this art who considered eloquent speech (al-kalâm al-faṣṭḥ) that what is hard to understand and difficult to comprehend. As such, they considered obsolete speech (al-kalâm al-wahśī) and obscure words (gāmid al-‘alřq) and they described it as eloquence (fasāḥah) while it is the opposite of it. Because eloquence (fasāḥah) is clarity and plainness (al-zuhūr wa al-bayān), not obscurity and secrecy. (al-ţumād wa al-‘aţfā)”16 What I had doubts about is [the following]: “Strange words (al-kalimāt al-garībah) are incompatible to fasāḥah for us, even if they were eloquent (faṣṭḥah) for the people of that

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15 I did not find any information about Al-Şirāżī.

16 Double quotation marks original.
period.\textsuperscript{117} In other words, strange words are eloquent in a certain period and not eloquent in another, relative to the difference of time and persons.

[3] Thirdly, all the scholars of rhetoric, whose books I have read, do not say "that strange words are incompatible to fas\textsuperscript{118}lah\textsuperscript{118} to us, even if they were fas\textsuperscript{118}lah\textsuperscript{118} for the people of that period."\textsuperscript{119} They rather say the opposite, as you will see. Al-Sakk\textsuperscript{119}t,\textsuperscript{119} the writer of Al-mi\textsuperscript{120}th\textsuperscript{119} said: "Fas\textsuperscript{121}lah\textsuperscript{121} consists of two parts. [One] resorting to meaning (al-ma\textsuperscript{122}nd\textsuperscript{122}), namely that speech is free from complexity and [one] resorting to [the form of] the word (laf\textsuperscript{123}z\textsuperscript{123}), namely that the word is authentic Arabic ('arab\textsuperscript{124}b\textsuperscript{124}y\textsuperscript{124}yah 'asl\textsuperscript{125}iyah). The indication hereof is that it is more frequent on the tongues of the eloquent [persons] among the Arabs, who are trustworthy [concerning their] Arabic, and that they use it more often ('an tak\textsuperscript{126}ān 'al\textsuperscript{126}ā 'alsunat al-fu\textsuperscript{127}sah\textsuperscript{127}a' min al-'arab al-maw\textsuperscript{128}g\textsuperscript{128}ān bi-'arab\textsuperscript{129}iyatihim 'adwar wa 'isti'māl\textsuperscript{130}hum la-hā 'ak\textsuperscript{130}tār).\textsuperscript{130} This means that each word that meets these two conditions is eloquent (fas\textsuperscript{131}lah\textsuperscript{131}) in all places and periods. A word then [cannot be] eloquent for the people of that epoch and not eloquent for us. Al-'A\textsuperscript{132}drā\textsuperscript{133}t\textsuperscript{133}t said in Ṣar\textsuperscript{134}r\textsuperscript{135}h at-tal\textsuperscript{136}t\textsuperscript{136}f\textsuperscript{136}t\textsuperscript{136} about the explanation of strangeness (al-\textsuperscript{137}gar\textsuperscript{137}b\textsuperscript{137}ahi) that "what is meant by strangeness that abandons eloquence is the (word)\textsuperscript{138} that is strange in the eyes of all the eloquents (al-fu\textsuperscript{139}sah\textsuperscript{140}a' kull\textsuperscript{140}hum)\textsuperscript{140}... and since strangeness is more general than that what abandons eloquence is proven by the strange words in the Koran and the Hadith.\textsuperscript{139} As such, the word that was eloquent for the Arabs (fas\textsuperscript{141}lah\textsuperscript{141} 'inda al-\textsuperscript{142}irab),\textsuperscript{142} is still eloquent for us (fas\textsuperscript{143}lah\textsuperscript{143} 'indan\textsuperscript{143}d), even if we consider it strange (wa

\textsuperscript{117} Double quotation marks original. \textit{Al-Mumkin} quotes a paragraph from his first article (\textit{Al-Mumkin}, 1882b: 619 [5]), in which he paraphrased a statement of the Society (Society, 1882a: 554 [5]).

\textsuperscript{118} Quotation marks original.

\textsuperscript{119} \textit{Al-Sakk\textsuperscript{119}t} (1160-1229) was an important rhetorician. His most important work was ‘Mi\textsuperscript{120}th\textsuperscript{120} al-\textsuperscript{121}ulü\textsuperscript{121}m’ in which he tries to cover all linguistic disciplines. The three major parts of the work cover morphology (‘īl\textsuperscript{122}m al-\textsuperscript{123}ṣ\textsuperscript{123}af\textsuperscript{123}), syntax (‘īl\textsuperscript{124}m al-nah\textsuperscript{124}w) and style/rhetoric (bayān), hence Ibn Haldūn’s reference to it as ‘Al-mi\textsuperscript{125}th\textsuperscript{125} al-nah\textsuperscript{126}w wa-ta\textsuperscript{127}ṣ\textsuperscript{127}af\textsuperscript{127} wa al-bay\textsuperscript{128}n’ (Rosenthal, 1967: 336). See also (Versteegh, 1997: 123-126).

\textsuperscript{120} Double quotation marks original.

\textsuperscript{121} Unfortunately I did not find information about this reference.

\textsuperscript{122} Round brackets original.

\textsuperscript{123} Double quotation marks original.
law 'itsaqrabnāhā), because "strangeness is more general than that what abandons eloquence."124 In Taḥṣīṣ al-taḥṣīṣ of Al-Maḥāsini125 he said:

The eloquence of the single word is that it is free from strangeness and from contradiction from the adequate

[4] He said in his commentary: "Strangeness means that a word is obsolete and that its meaning is not manifest, that its usage is not familiar, rejected by the generally accepted usage, avoided by the natural disposition (al-tihā)."126 It is obvious that the word that combines all these characteristics in itself is not eloquent (faṣīḥah) for all times. As such, it is impossible that there now exists a strange word that abandons eloquence (garībah garābah muḥillah bi-al-faṣāḥah) if it was at some time eloquent. He said in 'Turaq as-sāriḥāt bi-al-gawādī'127 on the explanation of strangeness (al-garābah): "strangeness is that its usage is not familiar for the pure (al-ḥullas),"128 (and they are the pure/eloquent Arabs (wa hum al-'arab al-faṣih).129 Then he said, "Know that what is not familiar in usage among them (gayr ma'nās al-'isti'māl baynahum) has not a clear meaning for them (gayr zāhir al-ma'na 'indahum) and therefore you see that the people explain it, sometimes because the word has not a clear meaning, sometimes because it is not familiar in usage, and sometimes because of both of them."130 As such, the words that were eloquent (faṣīḥah) for them cannot be described by strangeness that abandons eloquence (al-garābah al-muḥillah bi-al-faṣāḥah) and they do not deviate from eloquence [just] because they became strange for us.

[5] Concerning the second part of his reaction, my answer to it is that if he is not convinced by what Al-Muqtatāf and I wrote concerning the possibility of refining/revising the folk language (tahṣīṭ luqāt al-‘āmmah) and the priority of

124 Double quotation marks original.
125 Unfortunately I did not find any information about this reference.
126 Double quotation marks original.
127 Unfortunately I did not find any information about this reference.
128 Double quotation marks original.
129 Brackets original. Faṣīḥ is written in the singular form and not in the plural (fisḥ or fisahā') as one would expect.
130 Double quotation marks original.
using it. I think that I can only write a book in which I demonstrate to him and all those who support him in his statement, that the Arabic language and all the languages of the world adhere to changing century after century, year after year, day after day, which is the case for almost anything on earth. This change is taking place in the Arabic language today, and was taking place before and will continue to take place as long as the laws of being [continue to] follow the same way. The acceleration of the refinement of the folk language (al-'isrā' 'ilā tāhīth ḫagāt al-‘āmmah) is the precipitation of what will happen [anyway]. But time does not allow me to [elaborate on] this, so I refer the respected [Qandalaafi] to read the books of the modern Western linguists on this subject.
11. ‘Nağāh al-‘ummah al-‘arabīyah fi luğatihā al-‘aṣliyah’
(The success of the Arab community in and by means of its original language)

Mitrī Qandalaft, (July 1882, 107-110)

[1] To the Sirs, students of this epoch. With an excuse to you that this title and the word ‘language’ pass repeatedly before your eyes, so that you say: Spare us this ancient talk. Time has folded its shabby garment. Its fans were struck with depravity while the cloth of abasement covered them. We need mathematics to train our minds and a portion of wisdom to show us the truth by means of proof and the secret of the hidden contents of nature. The Creator will be praised for his creation, by which we will extract a treasure that will still our hunger and that will even enrich us, while the harshness of time almost made us disappear. Maybe you said that the truth comes from your Lord, so you are among the rightly guided ones. This is the tongue of time, my source and intellectual orientation. I only worship what you worship.

[2] However, incline yourselves a little and have mercy! Next to the word you will see a word, which is a connection between your fundament and the fundament of your language. Time inserted a hand that attacked a sun. Its face tries to eclipse it despite its intention to enlighten and to violate all its smoothness despite its wish to ameliorate. It calls, and here is the surprise, ‘I am the protector of its sanctum and the defender of its honor,’ while the consequence is only its destruction, so that for him constructing is the same as destroying and water is the same as a mirage. The situation pleaded me to intervene in this battle, or how can you sit [and wait]? The weak from your people who has a limited ability has associated himself with the one who is knocking on the door. But despite the inactivity of the natural disposition (ğumūd al-qarībah), the immobility of the mind (jumūd al-dīhn) and the scattering of the mind (taḥatttut al-bal), he [the weak person] hopes for a victory

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131 Quotation marks move.

133 Quotation marks mine. In this metaphorical passage, the sun refers to al-faṣībah, while the hand and its face refer to Al-Mumkin and his proposal to replace it with al-‘āmmiyah.

133 This is again a reference to Al-Mumkin, ‘al-fāriq,’ meaning literally ‘the one who is knocking on the door’ as a metaphor for ‘the one who is broaching the subject,’ namely the subject of replacing al-faṣībah with al-‘āmmiyah.
and a triumph from God soon. So they supported him with supplication and hopefully he does not come with other than the truth as proof.

[3] In the previous issue of *Al-Muqtataf* occurred an article of the respected and dear *Al-Mumkin*. In it he suggested that we referred what we mentioned in the eleventh issue of the previous year. [His article] comprised three matters. (1) His claim that the proofs we mentioned there [to proof] that it is unnecessary to change the language to the folk language (taqiyir al-lugah 'ilã al-‘ammîyah) confirms his opinion that it is necessary, or at least almost. (2) His refusal to us of the attestation with the statement of Ibn Al-‘Afsîr, the writer of *Al-Muajal al-sâ’îr* in the question of fasîlah. (3) His misleading suggestion that he rejected our confirmation that some strange speech [that is] fasîlah (ba’d al-garîb al-fasîlah) in a certain time is wrong for us to use in this time.

[4] In answer to the first issue we say, firstly, that his first claim is without proof. According to us it [his claim] does not please him because of his apparently bright intellect and his critical mind. And if not, even if he wished to overthrow proof with [other] proof, I would bring the two [proofs] into the arena, and I would be for us and the readers comfort. He is not unable to summarize them both into paragraphs that are no more than this summary. How could the cause for this be disregarded? We will repeat here the content of our proof together with some clarification, even if it bores some of the readers. Not every weary person is a censurer. Namely, that the difficulty of understanding of scientific and industrial books by the common people (al-‘ammah) does not result from the essence of the language, but rather from a bad writing style and the lack of preparedness, necessary for reading a scientific domain, of the reader. And that the remainder [of causes of incomprehension], which is the difference between the book language (lugat al-kitâb) and the folk language (lugat al-‘ammah) is very limited and does not hamper understanding in itself. The reconcile questions that after that [remain] difficult to understand for the prepared student have neither cure nor medicine in the language. If not, would the opponent maybe claim that if, for instance, the mathematical questions and the physical cases were written completely in the folk language (lugat al-‘ammah), the commoner (‘âmmî) would understand them, just because of the easiness of the language (li-muqârâd suhûlat al-lugah)? If it was answered that it would be easier to understand, as he mentioned in his last reaction, then we ask him: ‘Is his determination to corrupt the language to such a degree (qa’d uhu bi-ifsâd al-lugah dâk al-‘ifsâd), [just] because there is a difference that does not hamper comprehension of the meaning, just?’

134 Brackets and numbering original.

135 Quotation marks mine.
With regard to vocabulary we say that in our language (lugatunā) there are famous and widespread writings on geography, arithmetics, algebra, engineering, natural philosophy, chemistry, algorithm, astronomy and medicine. Very rarely they contain non-jargonic words (gâyîr al-’ištîlāḥi min al-’alfāţ) that are unknown for the common people (al-’âmmah). Such jargonic words (al-kalimāt al-’ištîlāḥiyyah) are inevitable anyway. The least the one who doubts this must do is read [about it] and examine [it]. The one who is not convinced by what he sees cannot be convinced by information.

[5] If changing the language (taqyîr al-lugâh), such as [the change] the respected Al-Mumkin refers to, is demanded by the reasonable person because of any difficulty and [because of] any difference between the writing language and the folk language (ayû farq kân bayn al-lugâh al-kitâbîyyah wa bayn al-’âmmîyyah, why then do the English decision makers, for instance, refuse to change their language on the level of spelling? This is something of which they suffer enormously, so that most of their common people (’âmmatuhum) who write do not seize the pen before consulting the dictionary. How do we tolerate the exaggeration of the known difference in our language (al-farq al-’ašâr fi lugatīnā) and do we exert pressure on it, although we see that Western students spend long years to study the basic rules of their language (dars usûl al-lugâh) and its literature with the aim of becoming schooled in the meanings of speech and of commanding the art of composition. Here we ask our opponent, [who is] (apparently)136 widely read in the study of languages, do the Western common people (’âmmat al-’âfrang) know thoroughly the vocabulary of their languages (mufradât lugāthīm) and the other styles of expression? Do they understand every industrial, scientific, literary or linguistic book? If he responds on the first two [questions] positively, on the condition that the reader is prepared and that [the book is] accurately written, we say that our common people (’âmmatunā) would also understand [such a book] if this condition [was met]. If he answers on the latter two [questions] in the same way, we would reject the answer. Because if it were correct, there would be no need for them (meaning, the Westerners)137 to devote lessons to the literary and linguistic disciplines in the same way as lessons [of the other disciplines] and to make it obligatory for the students in the schools. Among the collection of our proofs is that despite the existence of a great difference between the writing language and the current [language] among them (wuqūd al-farq al-’aṣîm ‘indahum bayn al-lugâh al-kitâbîyyah wa al-šâ’î’ah), we know from hearsay and the attestation by examination that they disapprove of the use of written language use in familiar conversation (’iti’māl al-’alfāţ al-lugawīyyah al-kitâbîyyah ft al-’aṣâr al-

136 Brackets original.
137 Brackets original.
ma‘nūs). So then their students do not learn [written language use] by hearing, but only by studying [it] as the Arabs [do]. So why then does our righteous judge [Al-Mumkin] spare them of blame while he operates the stick on us, while they and we are equal in crime?

[6] Secondly, is it permissible to attest with the statement of Ibn Al-‘Aţfî, the writer of Al-matâl al-sâ‘îr? The writer of the reaction denied that it is permissible and we refute his denial with the following.

(1)\textsuperscript{38} Attesting with a statement that is confirmed and correct is allowed for any consideration of the producer of the statement. If the idea that Ibn Al-‘Aţfî is not one of the scholars of rhetoric, it does not invalidate his statement that is in accordance with their statements.

(2) The fact that in his biography it is not mentioned that he is counted among the scholars of rhetoric does not exclude him of being one of them. If the denier proceeds in analogy to this, then he would not allow himself to attest with Al-Širāţ and Al-Asfārā’î, for instance, because of the lack of reference in their biographies that they belong to the scholars of rhetoric. [Moreover,] Ibn Ḥallikān\textsuperscript{39} mentioned Al-matâl al-sâ‘îr, extolling it with a lot of praise, saying: “And he (Ibn Al-‘Aţfî)\textsuperscript{40} has [written] a lot of texts that demonstrate his enormous erudition. The confirmation of his eminence is his books, which he titled Al-matâl al-sâ‘îr in which he collected everything without forgetting to mention a thing that is related to the art of writing. He stated in the introduction of his book about himself (if he is not counted among the liars)\textsuperscript{41} something that exemplifies his ability and wide reading in the science of rhetoric, what he stipulates [here]. “The science of rhetoric is for the writing of poetry and prose what the basic principles of jurisprudence are for judgements and the proofs for judgements. The people wrote books on it and they earned gold and firewood.\textsuperscript{42} There are no writings that I did

\textsuperscript{38} Brackets and numbering original.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibn Ḥallikān (1211-1282) was a historian who wrote a biographical dictionary ‘Wafayāt al-‘a’yān wa ‘anbā’ ‘abna‘ al-zamān’ (The deaths of prominent people and biographical information about their contemporaries) (Fück, 1971: 832-833). Probably Qandalaft refers to this work. Fück also mentions that Ibn Ḥallikān and Ibn Al-‘Aţfî knew each other personally (Fück, 1971: 832).

\textsuperscript{40} Brackets original.

\textsuperscript{41} Brackets original.

\textsuperscript{42} Meaning that some were successful (and became rich), while others were not (and remained) poor.
not examine thoroughly and of which I did not know all the details. How can he [Al-Mumkin] defile the right of this erudite [person], who has perfect knowledge and who followed the road of seriousness and not of imitation. In his book, he quoted more than once the most famous rhetorician, who is the most competent authority, namely the writer of Al-muhtasār wa al-mutawwal [namely, Al-Gazālī]. By the eminent scholars, does the opponent not know that somebody like Ibn Al-'Aṯr was an example for the scholars of his time? His book was commented on, and the commentaries were commented on as the investigator, the writer of Ṭ āṯ r al-'adhār transmitted.

(3) If he states that the art of writing is not [the same as] the art of rhetoric. We say that [this is an argument] against you, not in favor of you, because the first is wider than the second, since the art of writing is based on the art of rhetoric and the principles of its issues stem from it. So, the expert of the wider [subject] is self-evidently and necessarily an expert in the more specific [subject].

[7] (Thirdly), the question of fāṣīḥah in reality.

The writer of the reaction [Al-Mumkin] made [the reader] belief, when he mentioned the statements of the rhetoricians, that we contradict them in their statement "some of the old eloquent [words] (ba'd al-faṣīḥ al-qadīm) are wrong for us to use in our time, so that they are even not considered faṣīḥ anymore." No wonder that he was carried away by his imagination in this research. Despite that he is apparently precise, he is a slippery spot for the delusions of many. So, if he is not given the necessary investigation, the leader will be unknown and the one who is guided [by him] will go astray because of him. The origin of this is that obsolete and strange words (al-fāʿ al-wahṣī wa al-aṭārī) and [words that have] the same meaning occur frequently in the books of the rhetoric, [fluctuating] between the general and specific (al-ʿumūm wa al-ḥusūs), the limited and the broad (al-taʿqīd wa al-ʾittāq). Nevertheless, the important for us of this in this context is the confirmation of our previously mentioned claim. And that is proof.

[8] In the Muṭawwīl of Al-Gazālī, which is a current [work] among the students of rhetoric is mentioned the following: "the [category of] obsolete [words] (al-}

143 Quotation marks original.
144 Brackets original.
145 Quotation marks original. Qandalaft opens the brackets, but does not close them.
146 Literally: No wonder that the riding animal of delusive imagination roamed with him.
147 Check reference.
waḥṣī) consists of two classes. One [consists of] beautiful strange [words] (gārīb ḥasan) and the other [consists of] ugly strange [words] (gārīb qabrīḥ). The use of beautiful strange [words] is not wrong for the Arabs, because it was not obsolete for them (lam yākul waḥṣīyan 'indahum) (meaning, that it is obsolete for us).

Such as, šarr nabat, 'ismāḫarra, and qamjara, and these [words] are in poetry more acceptable than in prose. There are [also] the strange [words] in the Koran and Hadith. The ugly strange is completely unacceptable to use, and is also called the rude obsolete (al-waḥṣī al-ɡalīz). Ṣ Is the meaning of this statement then not precisely what we meant and does it not have the same content as what we quoted from Ibn Ḥajr? And if not, is it then permissible for our scholars to use every strange word that appeared in the Koran and the Hadith, despite of the fact that it deviates from the general rules? Such as, 'inna ādān la-sāriḥān' which appeared in the Koran [and] 'wa laṣṣa min am-barr am-ṣiyām fi ṣm-safar' which appears in the Hadith in stead of 'al-barr, al-ṣiyām and al-safar'. In the same way as they permitted it in their time because it was the variant (luqah) of some Arabs. What results from all this is that some of the strange faṣīḥ in ancient times is forbidden and unacceptable to use now and as such, not faṣīḥ. If he stubbornly insists that it is forbidden to name [an utterance] not faṣīḥ because its use is unacceptable, we leave the decision to the researchers with good taste.

Mīṭr Qandalaft

148 Round brackets original. This must be a remark inserted by Qandalaft.

149 Double quotation marks original.

150 Quotation marks mine instead of original brackets.
[Footnote of the editors of Al-Muqtatf]

It appears to us that the most important of what the debaters are attached to concerning *al-luğah al-fasîthah* and *al-ţâmîtah* is their research on the question whether the beautiful [but] strange [word] (*al-garîb al-ţasan*), which was acceptable to use for the Arabs because it was not obsolete (*wâshiî*) for them, is obsolete for us and, as such, is unacceptable to use for us. In our opinion, after investigating the proof of the debaters, they hale one another for the judge, namely the great Arab scholars. Maybe they can forward an explicit and clear text that does not need further explanation in order to answer their question, either by confirming or denying that it is acceptable to use the beautiful [but] strange [word] (*al-garîb al-ţasan*). If they came with an unmistakable judgement they would offer the students of Arabic an undeniable service. And if not, then this is the end of this debate in this section, without rebuke or blame.
النظرة والمللية

تصفت به وبسمة وعمت غنية وحية، بل كيف يسخحت هذا النافذة المفتي الذي سلك طريقه برغبة بالحياة. وقد استشهد في كتابه من أشياء الأساطير منذ العصور القديمة، وعمرها يعود إلى آلاف السنين. وقد كتبته هؤلاء المفكرون، وعمرهم عديد العصور في سبيل فضاح آثارهم.

وردت على المسرح شجاعة نقل الحقائق صاحب آثارهم، فان تأله للكتابة غير من البال. فإذا كانت من الناحيَّة لا ينفعت في الرأي، فالرأي لا إلزام من البال، فنأسف في النهاية في النحاء، فنأسف في النهاية في النحاء

(4) مسألة الفصحاء حقيقة

فقد جاء في المعلَّم الفاضل نفي عنطلة البابي، ما بات "واللحيّ حمان غريب حسن

وغربي قتج في الأمر، أو الذي لا يأت على العميقة لا يأت على العميقة

وهو عندنا وحنو، وذلك مثلا فتونا وأشقر. وتُخَذِّر في النظم الحسن منها في التفضيلة، في غريب الفرائض، والتفصيل، وغربي الفتح يأت على الفصحاء مطالباً. وغريب الفتح يأت على الفصحاء مطالباً. وغربي الفتح يأت على الفصحاء مطالباً. وغربي الفتح يأت على الفصحاء مطالباً. وغربي الفتح يأت على الفصحاء مطالباً. وغربي الفتح يأت على الفصحاء مطالباً.

نفَّذ هذه الكتاب، في أثر، ونسف معيون الذي تقوله عن ابن الأثير، وتبثج الأثير عن علماء

استعان كل غريب جاز في الفنار، والإبداع على كونه، وخلق الفنون الطبيعية. وذين (إن ملَّا

الساحرون) السواحرون (وليس مرت) إدماج، إدма
النظرة والمراسلة

لا يمكنني قراءة المحتوى باللغة العربية. إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة مع شيء آخر، فأنا هنا لمساعدتك.
لطنس يو الادمان، وفصل حكمة بيرنا العذبة بالبيتون وسرمه مكونات الطبية عظام البلاي بذا خاتم ونستخرج يورا بعد الزي بل بذنبا وكتابد شدة الدهر فيها، أنك تلد قلوب من ركز دائم.

ونحن نستقلان الرياض ينيرز ويشير ونادي فلا يعيدنا ما نعدين.

نحن ملأوا الفطر داليحا رمز على جانب ألمك كاذبة في ناقة أم يسلانك قد دس الأبد يرا بعد تحتات على نفس سماء محاول كنها على قيد الانت מחيد منا كل أسفل على راحة الفقهاء ويتأدي رسم الجهد في خلفد الأذن أهدا الفاكهة الا أننا هزنا حتى استويان.

داري النبا، والخير يلمع وسراب ثكثبن لإنجل في هذا الفناء ما نك تعدينا.

ولقد أنس بالذكري عازر من بجموع يعطب لا يثبت ولا يثبط. ولكنك برز عند الفرقة وجدت.

الله ونستثث السبل ونسرء من الله وفتاه فريدة، نفوا روى بالدعا وعسانان لا ينوي باركي ديلاء.

جاء في النمذة السابق من المتطف الفن، جلست المركمين العزاب يشيد أورم يا تبس ما جباه في أبيض.

النادي عشر من السنة الأمعية يقطر على ثلاثة أورور في الدهر يمان ما أوردنا ما كان من الأدب.

على عدم الوجه تغمر اللغة في 마음ه يصرد ما يكد على راية في هذا الابزاب (9) ائتمار على الاستخدام يقول ابن الاصر صاحب الدير الساعر في مسألة الصادقة (8) يهام وهو دفنا مرس.

بعض أكامل الغريب القصص في زمن يعتاب علينا استعمال في هذا الزمان.

فتعل في الجواب على الأزر أن تدعوا الإلهاء عامة النيل. وفي حسابنا الله لا يرضي.

أيا ما تبين من ذوو sendData ومخاطرة الغاند. وايا فلزت رأى صنع الدليل بالدليل لا نزال الأنين.

صاحب فانالدا فانالدا الراحة يوجوب عاجز عن نظمها باستر. لا تريد عن ذلك الإيل مرك كان.

سبيه هذا الفعاص فان تعب ما تحتون ديلاء مشغوليلا بعض الإيضاح وله ملته بعض الفوض. فأكل.

محلب ولفاك ما ينتمبه، وذلك أن ليست صعوبة في ذلك الكتاب العذبة والصناية نتائجه.

ذات الل(Il) بل عن سوء أسلوب التأليف وفهم استعمال المسماري المطلع المتعة. وإن البقة من الفرق بينه أكادب ليلة العش قلأ نيجع قد اعطا دن النظم. وما ينصح بعد ذلك من.

وصمع المسائل على أمرها الطالب المستند فهو ذا ليس علة في طلب ولا علاج. ولا افئت الماظر يذعه أن كيئة قضية الرياحي مسالا ومجاهذ الطبيعية بلغة العلماء تاما بهد العلماء.

س يذعه أن كيئة قضبة الرياحي مسالا ومجاهذ الطبيعية بلغة العلماء تاما بهد العلماء.

وإن أجب بعدها تكون أقرب للنظام كما جاء في ورد الإغري سان ما أهل من العد. إذا قضاو تصاحب اللغة ذاك الاستواء يتهيئ لا يعنى он المرور. ما من حيث المفردات تقول أن.

ففين دعوات مشهورة شاختة قبة الخطر واحبة ذبابة وإذا خدمة ونفطية الطبيعية إكليا.

والغزارة واخته وقلب حققابلها في غير الإصطناعي من. انفط الخلفية على بعض العلوم.
الواضحة والمملالة

لاستغلال ان الاستغلال هو حل محاولة جبرية عن عدة أعداد واحدًا بعد واحد حتى يعبّر
العوضة اعتمادًا على الجواب في واحد منها أو ترسيبية تحويل المعادلة إلى معادلة أخرى لحلها، فإن
هناك ذلك يظهر جملًا أدناه، حل جفاء المثل التي يرام بما هو الاستغلال بعضًا كحل المعادلة من
المعادلة الرابعة لث - 10 = 12 = -6-1 = 4 = 8.

لو لم يكن ذلك الاً بالإيجاب، وقد جمعت عن فاعلة عامة لمجنود بعده ذلك فوجدت معادلة من
المعادلة الثلاثة عوضًا حلاً من المعادلة المفرطة.

لإذ المعادلة العامة

لأ- ل = -ث

فاضحة لك = (ج - ل) ل = (ج - ل) ل

وإذا نقرأ المعادلة العامة

(ج - ل) ل = (ج - ل) ل = (ج - ل) ل

واذا نقرأ المعادلة العامة

(ج - ل) ل = (ج - ل) ل = (ج - ل) ل

فب مباشرة الممولة لمثل هذه المعادلة لا تقول إن أن كان

(ج - ل) ل = (ج - ل) ل

وإن المعادلة من المعادلة الثالثة كاذب، فإن فرض أن حضره المثل التي يرام بعدهوحدًا.iterator
البديلة كانت هي هذه المعادلة أما بالاستغلال وما به فهو كان الأولي صار الاصلي استغلال
إذها وإن استعمل طريقة أخرى كان الأولي استغلالا في الممولة المفرطة.

هذا إذا ما حل حضرته فئة افتترد، فلا يكلم إن الاستغلال الثالث (خالفة فئة الفعالة
أدرس في راجب، فإن تحويل معادلة

(ج - ل) ل = (ج - ل) ل

إلى هذه

لاسير إلا بعد المثل بـ 8.11 تقبل النكهة على ي- 1.1.1، أبد ما يبره عن الواحد حرب ما هو
عين الاستغلال

نهاج الإضاءة العربية في التفتي إلى الاصلي

سادي طلة هذا الممزه

معتشر المك النافذة بـ 8.11 إثارة هذا الدرون تكرز أن الفنول دعبن من حدثي قد
طوري الزمان رذاً الرئيسم فتضرب على عشاق الذهاء وكسام شعب الفوينان، فنا أناجنا إلى في رياضي
حضرت منذر الاستثناء الفاصلين

غب اختلاف خطأ كرم، أعزم أن تورد في آخره الذي من السنة السادسة المنطقت ووجه 38 مسألة جبرية لجبر الذكر يخالف مشايخه ملحوظا ورد على أن الهاشة مسيلة مسيلة إلى اللَّحَلَة الاستثناء وضرورة بالجبر بينهما وقَتِرَت حَالًا جَزيرًا بَدْنَ الاستثناء فِي سبيل الجبر عليها كالمانكاب وهي عضو قطبي تحتين شُرب احدهما في جذر الآخر. فصل الضرعتي مضروب 2 في جذر ؟ ثم في الجزء الثالث وجه 58 ذكر حلفا لجواب تعبيرية تذكير على طريقة ما هي ان الاستثناء محض، ولذلك ذكر لها حلف آخر، جردة الماhardt وجه 49 لسماحة تحيه بك منشور بإسم قانون كاردان في طريقة جزيرة القاصل (على سبيل الحرف). ود أعجاج في جلجل الاستثناء وغيرها، ثم سأل مسألة مسيلة على نفسها جرة 233 من وهي الاستثناء 8 (بدون الاستثناء) في الجرزان جرة 42 ذكر حلفا لسماحة أديس بك راغب ولكن على طريقة مطوله كأولوس الاستثناء إلا أقرب منها إلى المانكاب. هنا إفادة إيفاد الاستثناء من الفارع المذكورين ومساء الكلام ولكن يوان القريبين حلالًا طريقة جردة مشيدة بسيلة كما ترونه أرجح إدراج حليم الرئيسية مع رسالات هذه البيئة المنطقة لخلق بروز للرياضيين الكرام فيجوؤون على معارضة الفاصلين الذين حطروا عليها وكي القفصل
لا يد ان اخض الطرف عتبارياً تجم المراهان أيضاً إلا بإابب السياحة العمانية إياها إلى الاغفال من معهية الهوية في المركبه ذاتها السوقي وهو بحجة بالتعظيمات التي لا يلقي الفعل منها.

6.

كانت فصيحة النسخة البيضاء كانت نسخة بالança إلى المثال ذلك الزمرم ومباشرة أخرى أن الأكلات المتراكب فصيحة في عصر وغير فصيحة في آخر باختلاف الأذان والإغلاق.

7.

كانت كلاً من كل علاء البيضاء وفانت على كلام لا ين Ölأ أن الأكلات المتروقة nghĩaًا للقصيدة البيضاء كان فصيحة بالensa إلى المثال ذلك الزمرم ولكل السماك صاحب النطاق إذا تما الأكلة فصيحة في مقدمة راجح إلى المهى ومخبوعات الأكلة، من العيد وراجم الفن الأساتذة وكان مدرسة عربية أصلية وعالية ذلك أن تكون عليه السحيم من المثل المتروق بعدها مما جلبها ما أشارت أن كل كلمة عائدة مذن الشطران فصيحة في كل بن إلا أن كل كلمة في النسخة إلى المثال ذلك الزمرم وغير فصيحة بالנסה البيضاء، وقال الابن الفراجي - في شرح الفن في تنسيق المرة فإن المراد بالقراءة المقالة للقصيدة معين (الفن) غريبًا بالنظر إلى النص القرآني ويكون القراءة مألومًا على النص الفصيحة تحت غرب النزغ والعدم بيت على هذا النقلة التي كانت فصيحة عند المبكر تأتي في النص الفصيحة عند توزيعها على "القراءة ما يقول بالقصيدة"، وقال في تقف نموضه الفضائي.

فصيحة المفرد أن مشكل من قراءة وروي، تناور في قراءة "القراءة في كروم الأكلة وحيدة عبر ظاهرة المذه ولا آمنة الاستعمال بها والمراة وندر منا التصاغ"، لا يلمع أن أكلة الحمام فيها تنهينه النكتة في كل عصر غير فصيحة ويطول فلا يمكن أن توجد الآن كل غريبة النص القرآنية بالقصيدة وياود جايت في وقت من الأرواح فصيحة، وقال في اقرأ الساخن بالقياسية " فيما تشير "القراءة في قراءة" تأتي إلى تأويغ الاستعمال بين الناس("وم المبكر الفصيح) ثم قال "وما هو غير نص الاستعمال بين غير ظاهر المهد عندنا". 

8.

38
النظرية والمراسلة

فقد رأينا بعد الانتباه ووجود هذا الباب فتحة تغلبية في المعرفة وال *)((لة للفهم وتعزيزًا للإذاعة، ولكن المشكلة في ما يثير فينا العواطف غير متانة، ولا يخرج من موضوع النص أو موضوع النص عليه. إلا أننا نستطيع أن ننظر (1) إلى الملاحظات والنيماتيئن من أننا نستطيع أن ننظر في بعض النصوص والاذاعة. وإذا كان كلاً من أغلاب قريب أو أغلاب بعيد كان المعركة بأعلى.

(2) في كل ما قد ودأنا، فالملاحظات الوضعية مع الإيجاز-لOOK على المطلوب.

(3) مستقبل اللغة العربية

وقد علينا الإجابة على عدد من النظريات الأخرى. ولكن إذا كان الأمر فشل لا يزال فلا تشعر داعيا للاتصال

على الإجابة، فإن هذه النظريات تعليم الفاظ في بلغة عربية هي رابط محكم كيف كان، ونعمل في ذلك. فبالنسبة إلى صرف الألف ما لا يتناسب فلولا نسأله. فبمثلك أن الكتب العلمية والصناعية لورثة ولا تصدع بلغة الأمام، كتب أقربنا نريد استمرار المطولة وكم.
الساعة السادسة

أولى سنة المكتبة السادسة أن تأتي، فإن بيْنها الاْداخيك، والذي يُبدِي عفَّا، من حضنات المشترين الذي يرغبون في مثابرة، السقة العائدة إلى السنة القادمة. فإذا انتهت خمسة مشترين أو أكثر في الإحصاء، وبعد أن يفتتح سلآ إلى الأدوات في عربة، فإن الخمسة في السنة التي جراءها قد أثبتوا من خمسة عشر، وعشرة في السنة إذا كان عدد التسعة أكثر والمئات لا بد من رواة المشرفة، ثم يرسلون إلينا، الذي يتعامل مع الجهات. وإدارة المكتبة في الوقت، في وقته بالاحتلال.

إعلان من المطبعة الشرقية

مفاده ما ساَءٌ للجميع، في أعظم المذاعم الصغرى. وقد جعلت لما المشترين حسب ما في هذا الجدول، ورق أسود خام، ورق بالي خام.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>السنة</th>
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وكل من الخبراء يبحث بسماوة الخصبة في السنة، فيما يشأوا. أما الرجل الذي يفتح الله عينه في مكان ملمع، كثيراً من أصوله. أن يبدي الإثبات، بالإثبات. يمر من خلاله إلى عمل إصلاح الدخاني الذي يحرص عليه. صفة مصرية باحثة، على يد من بريدة.
لا يعود استعمال العرب عنه لم يكن عدم وعياً وهو عدنا وحناً، فهذا السند عنده في أزواجه، والصراحة ينبغي أن الإنسان يوجه إملائها الأديان من هذا النوع، فما تقول المفتوح التأثير على أن سما defends هذه في تحديد القضايا وإلقاء وحناً. خبر الأفكار لا يوجد عليه.

(٢) ونما استدلال على أن سما عبد الله العصبة، المعتقل في الدم في لبنان، في عام ١٠١٧، فإن من آخر عليه هذا السامان لا يكفي (العذاب)، ونقاط النحو، من حيث الإنسان العام أن المليئة أبكته أن يغفل الأنسان ما يصنع في origine أو حتى، ونها، أن ينبغي أن يقتطع. للثورة، للثورة، للثورة، فإن سما يحتذى، مما يعج على أقدامها قسمة، فحجارها مدبورة، ومشرخ، على كل من أشياء له، فإن تنكر المفتوح، ودروازة المفتوح، فالأسمان دعوى من قليل باستطاعته هذا الإنسان، إعتبارية مبنت على أن (السكة)، القضارف سجول الطبيعة، والذي تجمع لنا أن كايين، لا يدوى إليه. يبلغ الأم، وناقش مفتي من جميع، ضعيف ذلك، الكبير، دفاع كاستية، كتب، قبائل جنوب أوروبا، في الروما، أو جمعها، أي، كرام، حقاً أية، من الخطبة، بسناحة. يطول وينطلق بث قتل الأصول، ولا ينعدم دافع بها، وعليه لها، من تلك الابتلاع، وإن ركض تطلق لغة السكان، دائمًا، أتى هنا أشاروا، ويفجر، على أن كاستية، قمع اليونانية.

الغنية لو أهل الآجر، وضفيرة، إنهما، ناهما باب تشراك التفاصيل وانتهاهما في المدارس على ما يسوي، أهل العربية اليوم، فإن اجتهاد على ذلك، بعد تسوي هذه الرسال، في الدين، فنافذ عينية، بعدها، العصبة، يفصل المذاك في عون نعمة نافذة، يحقق، وأتم، وأفعال في أطلالات.

كل من سكا ولا جوجا، سوا، أو، مغادرة، إلى نقد العلم، ويقوم بصلاة، بين نصائبه، وبين الأكلاء، وفإنه تعلم، إنما ياءنا، لبا، لا لا، كا، كاد يهان، بناء الرغبة أو أملية يهان، اللعاق محمود.
لاكتساب اللغة المكتوبة باللغة العربية (2)

استخدام كل من هذا الفن في أنتم هذا الفن في أنتم

فهو على الأقل أن عدم قراءة هذا الكتاب ليس نجاحًا في اللغة بل من نص شرط الناقد

فاعضادنا بالكثير من سائدة في النوع، والإطلاع والإطلاع

إبتكار للاستودير ونقد في اللغة، درجة الاستعارة لتحويل الفن المطلوب لبقي ووجه

اللغة واللغة، وهذا مثالي من شأنه بأن مطالعة الفن لا توافق على الفن المدرّس بل على الموظفة

ب่อยًا من وجهة الاتجاه، وذلك لا يمكن ببساطة أن يكون في اللغة، هذا مقتضى في

الحائل على ما ذكرنا من كتب الإخراج فوقية النمات، وما يظهر من موانع محيرة و억ج

حديًا كلاً، الموجودة أولًا في الفن المكتوب ( وما نشهد بمونس لاحقًا المحتوى الإلهام، ناخذ عند

الكلام على أنه لم يأخذ ارتباط الفن، بحاجة الحائل في الإجابة، تبرع المجلة

العديد، والمقدمات، والاتهامات، والبحث، وحل المشكل، وإحلال المربع، ووضع المباد

إلى غير ذلك، بحيث يرغم الكلام الطالب لما بيد حاول للنسر الإنجاز، إلا أننا، حتى يمكن، في

القراءة نعلم أكثر من الفنون الإبداعية واللغة، وهذا إذا عند النفس، وامرأة الغرفة وامرأة البلاط، وأخذ

الفصول بإسهامين، فذا توفرت شروط التأليف للدروس إمكانه علم نحن يتخذنا من قبلة اللغة

وموطاً، هو تدريجًا من الحساب، مثلًا إلى الجبر، إلى الهندسة وما تبعه، وتكون ملء الفضاء القاعـ

دال (كما فعلتنا فعلاً)، وأسس بمرور، فت أبها (أي الدراية) من أجى الفنون العامة وإليها استناء

لذين ويدفع للمؤسسة التكامل، وكأن الإستاذات لا تعرف سهولية، إدراك قضاها على موضوع

التناغم التأليف في الإخراج، والرجل، ونسر الساج، الجذر، نحو الفن يفيد فاكه ليست مسبوـًا

لغة بل النحو كبيرًا، ما يمكنه بها على تذكير صماعة وحل مشاكله

وإذا اتخاذ، يمكن على الجمعية الإبداعية، شارح الصلاحي، توحيد التوضيح والبلاغة، في

صلوات لأهل البلد، على أن الأفكار، الغربية من الدعاية بالنسبة للبناء، إن كانت دقيقة بنفس

الإكلال الذي يتوافق معها فيها يمكن أن يكون الكتاب، ونسمى (نارج الصلاحي) مجردةً من جذور الإستام، إن أنك في ذلك

النوتات العربية البينية مؤثرة، هذا المالام العلمي في الجملة، وهو من جمهور لأدب، تأديتها الكتاب

فقال في نفس هذا التوضيح والبلاغة، ما نقص، إن أكلام العلم هو أبدان للصين لفترة تكون، ما لفترة

الأعمال، يمكن أن اعتبار النصر والمصير، في كتاب اللغة، إذا كانت هذه الصناعة. لقد تكون ما لم تقع

الاستعارة بين إبراء النظر، والليان ميدان، إنها كانت مادة الاستعارة داير في الكلام دون

كانون الثاني 1955

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لا تمكّننا من بيع العين في العين في العين بل تضيء العين بضوء العين بل تضيء العين بضوء العين بل تضيء العين بضوء العين.

فانّا لا نرى ص حاحنا حكراً حكراً. لا نرى ص حاحنا حكراً حكراً. لا نرى ص حاحنا حكراً حكراً. لا نرى ص حاحنا حكراً حكراً.

في عصر حديثنا فنحّن على فنادق الدول فنحّن على فنادق الدول فنحّن على فنادق الدول فنحّن على فنادق الدول.

فانّا لا نرى ص حاحنا حكراً حكراً. لا نرى ص حاحنا حكراً حكراً. لا نرى ص حاحنا حكراً حكراً. لا نرى ص حاحنا حكراً حكراً.
في العربية ما في هذه المبارزة من المضارب كلا لجنة على منا من العرب على صغرتها، فالفال الميمنة، السادس اجنباء، الطرف عن توليات العرقية مجموع بشر العرب كفاه لا يتحلي الوجه.

أقول هؤلاء الأجنباء والفراباب فإن الجمعية الإلحادية وإن فاضت عنه لاختلاف الولاء في ذلك فقد مهناه وحل به خطابه في ذلك ولا يهد المعرض شيئاً. إن وجود المنزل على ذلك و냥نوت الدماء، لأن لقاء العرب المختلفة أنها خرجت بعدها وأسانها أن تبيوتها لمحة، فلما وجد اللغة العامة لم يوجد بها ذلك الباختاذ إذ الحاذي لا يرى ما يوجب تراجع اللغة العامة عليها فلا دخل على العرقي مارد ولا يرى أيضاً ما يوجب مرج لغوي أي ارتباطها، فلما مصالحة غير محسن لم يلو طلب منه استبدالاً باللغة العربية التي يعتقد أنها أدنى اللغات وإنما مناسب حساد فإنا لا مكثر حتى ذلك أثر أن الجماعة أثبتت مدعاها على فرض ثروة الله العرف المستقل.

جميع لفتح

قال الفاصل المكن، السابعين من العربية، كتب مجموعات العلماء باللغة العربية، يرثه المを利用して، فقدمت العلم، تنسوية، علب على سبيل منها، إلى النهاية، ومن قصة، إلى آخر، فاستحب مريع في مثله، وخلاص المعنى، يمكن تجليها إلى اللغة العربية، بإعداد المعلومة النقدية، أو التأويل، أو الصياغة، أو التحقيق، أو الترجيح، أو التفسير، أو الترجمة. لا تجاهل هذه النسخة، أو تأويل معناها، أو حفظ نصها، أو تذكيرنا. وتنص على أن ما تتغيره عبارة مرجع ان لا يوجد في هذا المسمى، كنور، من كتب م недоاع الإصلاح.

ورجحها، واتخذ ذلك، واتخذ ذكر لاحقة، الكتبية التشريعة، وتلقيت بها. إذا انتشرت في كتابات المدينة، ومكتبة مسعودية، لا تبقيها على كناه قف للناطق بلهام، إذا دعاحبة إليها حتى تلمع في سهولة، بطليت في ذلك، والدليل على ذلك إذا، إن من دراسة، موسيتار، وآثاره، فرنسا، ليس على تكرار.

قال الفاصل المكن، والسابق أن في العربية، كتبه لا يحصي في كل العلم، واللغة الأخ، أقول من طالع كتاب موضوعات العلماء باللغة العربية، يرثه، معتبر، قد تحمي العلم، نفسه على سبيل منها، إلى النهاية، ومن قصة، إلى آخر، فاستحب مريع في مثله، وخلاص المعنى، يمكن تجليها إلى اللغة العربية، بإعداد المعلومة النقدية، أو التأويل، أو الصياغة، أو التحقيق، أو الترجيح، أو التفسير، أو الترجمة. لا تجاهل هذه النسخة، أو تأويل معناها، أو حفظ نصها، أو تذكيرنا. وتنص على أن ما تتغيره عبارة مرجع ان لا يوجد في هذا المسمى، كنور، من كتب م недоاع الإصلاح.

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ма لم يرده فلاigan حيحنتن على عبارات اللغة الإبداعية

قال الفاضل المكن، أغراض تحديد الفصاحة ولإشارتها بخصوص اللغة الإبداعية و参考资料 المتطلبة.

*الآول لى المعجم الذي لم يرد في قوائم الملاحظات، والذي تغطي في ذلك إلى ما يجري بين اللغة والنوادر من قبل اللغة، ومن قبل المستعمرين. على الأقل، كان يقول وقيل بعضما باللغة القديمة، بما في فيها النمطية وبريقانية النص رفع الأخطاء التي كتبها بناءً على كنائس اللغة على كثير من خصائص معنا، مما يفتقر

العوالم والاتجاهات والمتنوعات في ذلك نادرة عن شكل شائع. وعندما كان نسب اللغة الإبداعية

اللغة المثالية، فكانت درس اللغة من الموطن، وحصلت اللغة المفيدة والبدنية. واما كلمات تأجيل

إجابة من اللغ، لم يسر لللغة جمالًا كله تقدير من قصائد اللغة وظهورها، وسرعان ما كله منه معنا،

كل عبارات فهو مسألاً إلا أن ذلك لا يفيد شيئاً لأن اللغة من اللغات التالية التي لا يوجد على مسألة الأ

بروفية من كتاب أو علم ولا مجال للدلائل في معرفتها، ولا يمكن من لم يدرس اللغة جمالًا كله عواقبها بالنسخة

ما لم يرده فلاigan حيحنتن على عبارات اللغة الإبداعية.

*الملاحظة*:

- الفضيلة أو الأستاذ أو الكبسار في العربية، فنثأبها، إنها إمدادات تدعم قواعد اللغة العربيّة.
- وقد تم التعبير عنها في النصوص العربية، وأن هذه الملاحظات قد تكون متصلة.
- تفضل على اللغة الجميلة لغة ناعمة تقدمها في النصوص العربية، وأن هذه الملاحظات قد تكون متصلة.
- تفضل على اللغة الجميلة لغة ناعمة تقدمها في النصوص العربية، وأن هذه الملاحظات قد تكون متصلة.
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على أتمّ التوجّه في مدارس مسارس المتّجهة على تلك الرسالة فإنّه ذا على اللغة العربية والفارسية والإسبانية بتيماً في نفسي للغات، بما أنّو في الوقت الحالي لم يقْدّر بالماتّة إلاّ ما يقدّر في خلاف قوله: "لا يمكن أن تكون العربية والغة في العالم إلاّ وإنّ ما يقال في اللغة العربية لا يمكن أن تكون المساعدة في اللغة العربية في هذا المكان، لم يبقى أيّماً من الشّارك أو ازترعات.

قال الفاضل المكن، إذا كان الفضل والثقافة واللغة العربية يتحقق في للغة العربية والماتّة في إشارة إلى اللغة العربية في هذا المكان، لم يبقى أيّماً من الشّارك أو ازترعات.

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الناظرة والمراسلة

روسيا في ألمانيا كما يذكرن اليوم على الهوية الأدبية. حسب ما ذكره جمهوري...

بات شرقي (قلت هنا: لا قل في الرأس الأول) أن في ذلك النهيم عن مبادئه الأولى من مباشرة...

له يرى في الفن" على المدار بأمومة ودية. نعمة في الفن وثبات الممارسات التي لا...

عشرات من المدارس ونيل رواية من الشارع. وقيل أن الله كتابة نهيم ولا ينفر من...

من نزولا في غير الوضاء والممارسات نهيم يخرجوا. تأذن خذطت المدامات نهيم من...

الوساطة خاصة في هذه شرعياته. وقول أن البطل جابة! لا أذكر أن طريقين لتجعل من المعنا...

ما يستحيل! لفترة طويلة. ثم الذين يعترضون وتصادمون نسيجا من أهل الوطن ولكن...

يتعارضون. فأذا توجس النشاطيات أو المعتقدات الفلكة في حين يحذو. ولا يقلن أن...

نيرن بان الموانئ تزداد بتعصرها.

إذاً حظى الإضاءة نهو الكراهية مما ذكر آنباً وثناها ما قد بيئة صاحب التألق المثير...

عليها. لا أدري أن كنها أمر ووجي وثنا لا ينفع الاعتقادات عليه الأحرين مسألة البشام والجمال بها.

تعمّد ويتماعي هام والثابت.

فأنواع جانب الدكر المدار الذي يتنع مع من ذهب منده. إن تلك البديلة التي ورد...

بображية ولا ينصحب صيحة الإبرار بسراً شجوياً ليس في ذلك شيء من المعال. وليست...

يتميذ الشعراء على المصايخ التي إذنناها بهم في أول هذه العام. وباخبنا لجذب من مراء الفو...

المال والآن يبرع أفكاره ونوراً رشيقاً إلى "المعارضة المكانية" يا اجمل الكلام إذا أخذ من قمع...

إحدى أعضاء جمعية بكاء سورية.

كيف القتال في كلام الممكن من الخطأ.

من أفلف فن استغفر فان أحسن إخال إلى الكلام وإنساً، يشام بسماو المتكلم والخاب.

اقترح اللبار عن صف محرز المختص على أهل الإجراد، وإليك إن بروحه من يمل diligent إخاء الكفه...

وإلى الكتابة نادر إلى ذلك أحد الإخاء ذوي الزاوية ناصب المورد وحل الهم فيضمن. فالإخاء يلياً...

وشان من قال صواباً فيلاً. اللفزار نافصة قد ترزا العربية على إنذازها ودانتها. الإخاء المقدة...

والخادمة وانذامه. ونذامه إن ينهي الإفراد لفأة كانت عنbuilding في وجود نفديها. أجمعية الإبداء يميت...

الصوت والروية فينعيها الفصام. والنزاعات لنا صاحبها في المصادر. تخصص تأبيزهم والمدفوع.
لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي في الصورة المقدمة. من فضلك قم بإعادة نشر النص العربي في صيغة مكتوبة للمساعدة في الطُباعة الآلية.
بلا عادلة عليها في مدارسنا، وأن لا نتعامل مع الأطفال الذين يجبرون دولة مصر وطبيعتها منذ قليلة قد صارت الآن عتيقة فتجري للفتور والفساد. وهذا لا يُغيب عن حسننا أن أعدت نزاعات الوضعية إلى بعض الأولى، و قد رأينا rez مولى كثيرة في هذه السنة، والتي نحن جميعاً عليها من الأمور من ثلاثة أرباع، بطريركية، و واياً الحروب. وهذا على أي حال، إذينا بالحوكمة الجديدة، و الواقعية.-

الثامن: إن دعاءي "إنه يُن يَلَّ أن تكون على الكلب الذي لا يُفْتَن عياً إلى اللغة العامية ببساطة في دعوي بالطابع"، والدليل على ذلك "كدف عنهم". إنها المبادئ للأساسية، أي بين حقيقة سيّان جابزي القاري، وليكن خير الوطن. وقد رأينا جمعية الكتابية و منظمة المتحدة وال_ASSOCIATION المخطوبة، أي الخريجين من قيام أن اللغة التي تكون بها هذه الهدى "لغة قائمة بنفسها ماstrate اللغة مصدر" أي العبرية الفظيعة، فكانت كذلك منذ تلك من القصص، وإن خلقت بخلاف الأسرار، في كابينة "دماء المصدور والابن"، في بعض نافذة السلم في اللغة، وقد اتخذت فيها ليس بوضع "وكم، واللغة المجرية" لذات الهدى، فإنه قد ذهب ونستند على هذه اللغة "ألف كلام عبارة" اللغة، ضرر إلى نزل بها الآية "لا أن اللغات المكاب، كان تغلباً مكان سامور المكتات، ووجه العالم، في بيضتها هذه المكتات وروم تحصيلها أن يأخذ نفسها، جمعة كلام القدر الجامع على أساسية من القرآن وحادث كتابه، والسلف، وزيادة تحت "تقال عن العرب" إلى غير ذلك من المشاريع التي ذكرت في صدر، وهي في نظر المبادئ، وهي يذهب فيها تصرف}

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النظرية والعملية

الطابق، إن عدم قراءة المولد الكتب العربية ليس ناجحاً من حيث قراءته. وهو راجع على قول

"كثيراً ما شعرنا كبدأنا على بعض العلماء فلا شهرنا جيداً ما حضرهم من اللغة السماوية" مع

إن لم أذكر الكتاب العربي وإن لم أذكر علماء ما يبحث عن أحكام الكتاب العربي أو قصة لغة

الأمة ما كان لها حاجة إلى توضيح أكبر. وإن هذه حقيقة أن الحديثة العربية وكل اللغات الآخرى

هي كتبنا مثلاً بسمة اللغة العربية. وكنا ذلك الكتاب نفسه لغة خاصة في بيتهات الهداية. إن

فإن كان أولئك الذين بذلوا قوة، فإن كان هذا فلا حاجة لنا إلى الكتاب الذي وجدناه في النقل.

كلاً كلاً الذي شرع به رئيس الجمعية العربية الفاضلة ولا مجتمعه التي أشارها مكتب الاداره

الدروبي لجاية اللغة العربية.

النقل، إن لم نذكر في منتهى الخليل وانطلاقًا طلبت "عاماً من الحوار، علم قصائد الجمعية، "فغراً

على الفكرة الأولى أولى فن نص ذلك لنصل لشامل لوصف الفن أولاد CORPORATION المثل.

ويما لا ينين في أي الأمير لم نشير لما أعد النظر فيها. وعلى الشايتي فيما لم أطلق عاماً من الحوار بل "واحداً من

الذين لم يدرسوا اللغة جيداً" بينما وردنا تكهن كلاً لا يقبل

الحاسة، تحديد الصلاة والانفصال بقصيدة ماجي وأنا فتاة الصمت عن شارح المصالح

وما قيل صادق دل ذلك على الكتاب العربي من باب اللغة الحرة إلى وضع النافذة السماوية.

وإلى هذين الابنا (زمان الجمعية) فما قيل هذا أول ولا أظن أحداً من علماء أبيان يقول

يختلف الكتاب في التلفظ والغلاف في النسخة فذلك حقاً، ولطيفاً النص في نظر الباحث فالماء.

بعض من وجوه الاستفادة من اللغة القرار في عصرنا، فين كأنه كن في أوروبا ما كان يمري على

المذهب.

السادس، إغواء الطرف عن قول واحد العربي جميع لغات المملكه لا تكون الحجة ولا

قوى على تشرير الرسالة الثانية مع أن أكبر الفاقد على إمكان جميع هيئة العام

المذاب، إن في العربية كثرة لا تقصى في كل العلوم الفيء، وإن جميع الأندون تقريباً جمع أكثر

الآلف الكبير، وبالأخص أن ذكروا إجابة الجمعية الفاسقة لان قد يكون على ذلك ماجاً في النفس المستع

حنواً قال من العلم الذي ليس له في العربية اسم، ولا يزال أطلق الميل، نحن كانوا سناً وآخرين ونود

المهارة لزيادة أكبر هذه العلوم، وإضافة مهارة العلوم تزداد الكلب العربي العربية وال العالمية.

والملاحف في عين بعض الكتاب العربية والحضارة وأعمالها أنغام، وجمعها المضيع في القصيرة واللغة.

والترجمة فعليها أعنى بترجمة الكتاب العربية والنساوة والزراءة من اللغة العربية وتحت مسمى

المراجعة والتفتيح، وتفتقرها الطائفة أولاً، ولكن البعض عليها، وأولئك الفن تنص على صنع الكلب العربية.
باب المناظرات والمراسلة

قد رأينا بعد الاستشارة وجدب أن هذا الباب فرصة في المناطر بإدخالهم وإدمانًا للألبان، وفقًا للحظة في ما يبرد فيه على جلبة إين براءة مكة ولا يبرد ما يخرج عن موضوع المختص وخليج بينه، المجاز والطيار منحت منه أصل واعد ومناظرات نظرية. في هذا العرض من المناطر التوجه إلى اتفاقك فذا كان نفتك الشائع غير عمليّاً في المفهوم بأعلى اعتماد خبير الكلام ما ألق ودله. فاللاتزادات الوقائية مع الزجرة أتكرار على المطلقة مستقبل اللغة العربية

جاج اللغة العربية في لغتها الإثيوبية

قبل من أن يصف فضفاض ولا لآلكت لساني الأول لم أوقع إلا الملامة من الذين قصري

درسهم على اللغة العربية وآداؤها ولم يبدي لهم الجهد في فشل النطق وتموجها وثالث التوحيد

الذي فاسد بما ليس من المعرف في هذا القرن، وعليه لا يبرد الأدلة على بعد الوجه

الذين يكرس أعداده ورغب الوجه الثالث الذي قال في الكأس اللب عمليّاً في بعد أن

المغربي وراءه ١٦٤. كما كان من المهم أن ن镯ي لرسالة غرناً تجري على الضرورات في هذه

على أنقبلها في

الأول، فضل العرب واللغة، ونهاها أناعها في وراء أثرها. وهؤلاء مث

المناظرات الدقيقة

الثانية، أن العبادة قد القرب في اللغة العربية مؤثرات تاري النهج عدوك، وفياً بها أيضًا في العلم

والسناج والرغبة ما غير الأفكار. وهنا لأنابها فيدًا أيضًا.
حربة يلاترو رنك

من استطاع ما نشرته المجلدات المصرية نقصان، عن حادثة الحربية التي شبت بينها في يلاترو رنك في ولاية تونس، نسخة عن ابتذالتها الكنسية، ما سبب تأريخها، خاص الحازم، الإسلام، ود رداً على ما سماه ظالمان، بن خروج، وكان المختصون على الأدلة، رفع الرعب في تلقي العدد، ووجهوا إلى الخروج رأسيين إلى المكان، كأنهم لم يكونوا، لا نحنوا اليد، فشد ذل صناديق المياه، خدمة من الفلاحين، إلخ.

هناك انضواء في فيضان، بها ما يزيد الخروج، ود ود، وما تخص الانتفاض، فمن كان يعده، كبره، فهدهدوا بها إلى الابواب، أو من فتحيني الطابع، والرابعة، فالسخرين، والرفيق، نحنهم إلى الخروج من الموارد، حيث من هدد بعد أن السلم، والرابعة،

بند أن الدوام، اعتمان تبقى داخلاً دون ملقيه، يد النار، جالساً، فقد نفعت، ب意思是 الدخان، ووقعة صريراً،

أما ما زاد الدوام، فهو، لم يسبيل المنمنه، تحديداً، الكائنين بين الملعب، وقاعة الفرح، ود الفضالة تأخرت، ببعض سهولة، ووقفت خارجاً، غير مهينة للطيف من، في الداخل، طنها ان أجمع، قد خرجنا،

ونا، دخل البولس، ذا، النبي رنك، بعد مجاهد ملأه، فوق بعضها، وآخر من، ضعف كابي، يرامت، العناصر على النار، أو كان، برنا، والابرة، إبهام، والمستويات، من الخروج، معهم،

 أما الذين، قدوا في هناء، عادة، في مدة، من ثان مالى إلى الفين، نفاستها، للحكمة، والإلهام، رفع منزها من الدمار، فضغطها، عرفوا فكرها، ودكروا، وعذبنا، لم أمد، أبداً، الفضي، جمالاً، (اللتين)

وع بعد جماعة نفاست على بلاها، أجحية الوطنية.
المانعة والمملكة

هناك مرسوم يتضمن:

«إذا كان هناك ميزة تتعلق باللغة العربية، فما أن يتبع عليه الذي سيأتي بعد، فإن ما نحن عليه اليوم يتبع عليه ما يأتي بعد، سواءً كان ذلك متعلقًا باللغة العربية.»

هذا المرسوم يكفر باللغة العربية، ويجبر على أن يُقبل عليه، ويستلمه، حتى لا يُستلم عليه، ولا يُستلم عليهLEYHA
على صحة الأسانيد والمعرف، وسُلِّمَت جميع غنائم لم يكن وسياج قمت فيها الاعتداءات... 

فأذن فلتته في الأقدام أمان في أيام البلغاء بين قيائل أكثرهم بناة آلة ما في العصرات فيها في مصر وسوريا والعرب والعراق بينه وبينهما وكابل آدم آدم فيها. في تدريجية لغة المينة فإن عملياً محلية ووضاعها مباهية فلم يكن السوري من الأدب العربي في المغازي والمغري من العراق والعراق من السوري، فإنه كأس خليفة الفلسطين والساحة بالإمبراطورية. ومثمه دون الاكتفاء على الجهوية منها خرط النقاد في تهيئة العلماء.

[8] ناباً. عدم صلاحية اللغة العامية للفكر كونه لغة الكتابة. يجب أنه ناباً لما اكتفاء به على إحدى اللغات وسبق هذا المعنى مالع مراحل أخرى ناباً عن جملة سلبية، وهو عدم الانسحاب من اللغة الكبرى منها لأن تجربة اللغة الكليبة لغة اجتماعية، واللغة الكليبة. لا يوجد بالطبعه. ولا يوجد ارتباط جامعة بين جزء النظام وقيق. وخصوص الكلام العربي.

لقاء تنير المساعي، فيها. حين تشير وتجرف النسو.

خلاصة اللغة الفصحية: فلما تعددت عن أن يكون فيها شيء ما ذكر لفواحة الذين، خربة الفنون، مكرست عواجشacketة اللغة الأساسية، وفيها مره ارتفاع ارتفاعات والصور والعمل والتعريب والتعريب، ما تحيدها على خطبة اللغات وما من الأخصارات والأشكال والخصات، وذلك من نماذج نماذج مثبتهما طريعاً أولويته، وتعارة مجراها ذروات الإضابات وروشور من الكتاب في كل الذراع والتعليم. ما يحكي نحو الاحتفاظ بأدوات الكتاب، فورينا بها في اشتعاله عن خلق اللغة الأمر أكثر من غيرها. وعندنا أدوات الاحتفاظ بأغث فغالب اللغة التي تكتسب مؤثرة الفراء، في خلق اللغة جديدة تنفيذها الشرفية. فاذا قد ازديج هذه اللغة نسية نصفها وهنوس ومعهداً يدبي ودبي...

ورفض بها اللغة العامة ليست عنها إلا لما ولم يستب.

وقد قرر في تعريف اللغة أنها أصولاً يعبأ بها كل شيء عن الأعراض، لكنها لا داري اللغة العامة.

تمعى على أفضل لفواحة من هذه الكتبية الآذان إذا اختصرت الإفرازات، أداة ثقاتها ويوم وإلهاء غير ذلك من التحبل والئام الفناني، حتى كانت في ذلك على ما أراها اللغة الدعاء والنساء.

(بولينك)

[9]

[10]
الماظرة والمريلة

اذنا قبل ان يعتزل ثلاثة فما هنا لائت الثلاثة راجع

بضاحه هذا الرأي يفتح من وجوب كهيرة ذكركمها

[؟] أولى اختلاف اللغة العربية أن يبيس ما جمل اللغة العربية من لغة اللغة وفيما من الاختلاف ونسبة

الظروف ما يمت بعبه الميام، وكل له من تلك اللغات الخلافية جيزةJOIN لدى مفاصلها

اللغات الأخرى في أن استعملها (دعم المختار) أو أن تولك كما باللغة السودية لما عليه يستفيد منه

العربية بعده ولا تتفحى منه العربي ولا لا يخزن ببدا المصري، وعلى امة اللغة من سوريا تفيد

على إحدى مدن بلدا قريبة إليه، فيهما فية خاتمة لم يكن فيها سوريا ولا خاتة شمس

هناك بعض سياقات من دوينا المبين بين اللغة العربية واللغات العامية، وهذا قد علمنه عن خبر

لاعن خرامة وحيد سجول النصرية في اشتهى إلى احدهم قرى، هذا الجزء عمل للمواجد

البولقية أنس أن ركعنا من الزمان في جمل الميام، والإصلاح كانهم إذ وجدت ذلك بينهم أيام

طعام لا يقبل ولا يقبل، وكذلك معبور على نحو ثلاثه أخر حث متمم من متكافل السكان في المحال منه

[؟] كثرة أولاي التلامية في أن ادرك شيئًا من الناظور العامية العربية وعبارات العامية، ومن بادي

علي أن أدرك هذا هو من الإرهاق، ليس حكراً عليه، إنما أقرن عليه مثابة من عبد دينبة، أميرية أو لواءية أخرى

أكبر ما علا شعب الغليان العامية وركب، كماแนحت إلى جملة من قبلهم فيما أعيد إلى إضاحها بإسم

اللغة عربية، اشتكى PWM وأرسل "قدنا وإنما من حليماً" أن "قوم قبل غلمانه"، وإذا

القصص يبت شعر ارثنا إلى وجه الغرائب مع ابنه من خصائص اللغة العربية، ولا يهامون، ديأ

بالمغتة مستقبلي عند إفنان ومن جاورهم، وهو من معتدلات اللغة العربية عند اللبابيين، والأخلاصية ان

لتفرم إثر إلى السفارة من اثبات اللغات العامية، ورس على هذه المناطة بذات مناطق سوريا ومس

على سوريا حر، والغرب ومصر وغيرها

[؟] ولا سبيل لم يكن للاعتراف بوضع هذا الاستغلال في اللغة العربية. فان تلك الاختلافات

المثارية عليها ليست إلا أمرًا عرضيًا لا يعد بها يمكن من تابع أراز عادة الفعكم في كل مكان، وإن

كل من نفسه ويأخذ على تعرق الفعال والمعتد، ويدير من الفعكم بإجلال وتبين، وخفض

المتصفي اليو وجاء في فرح واعظم تابع حكاية دوم، إليها بما من المطرادات، وحتى تجد

اثنتين مسيلة ما في المطرادات يندر، بعد ما رأى أحمورا في الأرجوزة، وإلى الففی، بين عشية

ويوارها. وربى اللغة العربية، جميع لائت ما بعده العبارات الخالدة، بل "عنتهم" المحمل في

(الواحد) لا يدعبنا إلى التكيب عنها تفصيلًا من صعوبة مأخوذة بل إذا أكثر المعرفات فيها ما يسهل
المفتي وخلاً، لا يكتب على تجميع المضار التي تنمى عن ترك اللة الأصلية والعارض عنها الأحب.

وأنا بنيان عمان مريرة، فإن بها الملاذ جامع، الجملة الشتية قد شرعت الجماعة الأثرية

الDimensions: 595.0x837.0
النظرية والمراسلة

درس هذه اللغات، وأظهر مذهب الناس ما يقولونه.

إذا فهنا النبؤات، والذين ألقاها من الأفلاطون، قد ذكر في أحد أعماق التحقنت لا على أحد أباداً، وهو نام النجاة ما يجب أن استعمل

الذكاء الوراثي معاً محذراً له مريم. لا ينفي من الأفلاطون، وما زعم من مكان، جميع الأفلاطون جمة في المقابل، يقال الحرية، ينوي أن العلة المحبة في مجموع مات ممتثلة، هو فلسفية مع الفرق، لعدم وجود الحامل على ذلك، وهذا لا يتوفر الدرايا من طالب تكتsimulation. عرف ذلك،

أما ما زعم الحنون من أن الأفلاطون، من الاستبداد، على العامة، مما أفسد من الفلاطون، التي تقع عند

الذكاء الملاحظة، على اللغة الإسحاقية لمعد وجد كتب عربية،ية الصالحة، والبلاغة، والحركة، والعلم

العذبية، إلا ما يبقي بها تكية، وإن جل ما في اللغة العربية ما يعود عاناً عمارنة عن بعض الكتب، مبادي، لم يغيب، وبعض الكتب الفاضحة، والذين، والذين، والذين، والذين، على مرتين، مثالية، فما وعدوا، جمع كتاب، يعود عليه صحة، والبلاغة، والحياة، والعلم، وفي مخالفة لما

اللغة على جميع، إلا أن يجعل أعلاه بعض، والعراة، يوصف العلم، بهذه، فإن جميع العلم، التي سماها، حديثة في

عذبة عن العلم، العربية، وإنما أمرها، إنها بعض، الذي، بعت إلى الاعصار، وخلاص

الاقتراح، كا، هو محمد، كل علم ودين. فإن، هذه البداية لا تقابل عنة، في حديث إن حصلت في بعض

الпределات، وتحديد، أن تهاج، إنها آللال، وإنها الاتجاه، إلى جميع الجレビュー. وكذالك العلم

وهم، يجمدون، التي تحمها، حديثة، على كيفية جميع المفاهيم، ولا تتاثر،

قد جرى، بدأ هذا المصرف. بعد مسائل، الفن، باسم مصور، اختيار بديلا، كما فعل المقدمون

بصائر الغيور، وهي جزء، مع هذه، وعملاء، والمدينة، وهي جزء من خرن الطب، وذلك أصل، ولا مشاهدة

وفي، فقط لا تذكر أن الرائدات التي تزعمها في رائدات، هي، في، والذين، الآن، المقصود، بالالتزامة، والاستقلال

الوصول إلى ذلك، يكون تجربتها إلى اللغة الإسحاقية مضجبة، والذين، وهو، يوجد نطاق مركز، بعض الكتب، الاستقلال، لا يبرر،

ما دام العبر، في حين أعوان، والقرآن يذكر، «ف، في، دعوا، 

كلا، فاريصية، ويجعلون، ألا، كتبها العربية، وهي، كبيرة، والذين، وذكر ما لا يعقل، ذلك بالدفيف، لا دعوة

بأنه يتقل الكتب التي لا يعده، عنده إلى اللغة العربية، فهي تدعى، بك، كما، في، وفاء ما،

أن السبب، على المسلمين، من العرب، كان يكون كف، في قراءته، الكتب العربية، تربك، إن، مما، غير

لما، خاصة، أن، كثير، عقوله، إذا، مستشار، في ذلك، وما، دعوا، يعده، محرزي
من المناطرة او عن المصادر، أو يعتبرون لا يتسارع في جميع الأوقات وإذ لا وفيهم وهم في آن، فإن قرر على محطات الأفلاذ، ونهايةً لا نظن أن تكون بينالفية في. وإذ ذلك لعدم قم المرتفع أو تركيب أكمل أو محطات على النفي لفروعنا معرفة ذلك بل لتوافق ذلك على أمور في ذلك على التلايت والآتام الأشعة باللغة العربية الموافقة فيها لهما السكرة الأقدام، أي تفت على جميع الفصول والصانع، والملاءمة بهاchap، زرع معروفة لغة وحيدة. إنني مدّي دولة قررنا وشيّينا أن نفتح الحapyrus وكتبنا بثدّر كتب العلماء والمليون والصانع وبستغي بذلك عن صرف قناعية على من الدعبل passer. فان الدين قد يترى على التلباق كتب الفلسفة والعلم بعد وردها على ورض بعض الكلمات إذا هنا لا ينتحب ما قلنا عند حـ هـ لا نزال قبض في أول الإراجإات وكم الكلمات الرحبية فذا اجتهد تثبت خواصنا. أن نرى من العلوم من لا ينتمي كثيرًا من الكلمات العربية إلا أن ذلك نادر والبارد في حكم الدم على أن ذلك لا يختص بمولما ولا اطم في هذا يديني أن جميع علوم الفترات أن مثله في جميع الموارد لغة العقيدة كا لانها خواص علام مزنهم، وينة، وفون قناعية شرائط. كما يجبه نشرلهم. ومبدأ على عدم تروي الحكر في مقالة الحال وفلاجة. ذلك من الشرط الذي اشترطه طالبًا على رويه. فيندم من الصانع التشغيل على كبار من الكلمات الرحبية. لأن المجتمع في منسوقة اللغة ومستعيا بيل كبر من خبر الدوايا العصرية. يعصر علما فيها، ولا يلمد من ذلك عند معرفته اللغة العربية ولا ضروب داعية. استعن تلك الأفكار المبكرة للحالة باللغة والناشئة بإن كأس فتحة للنسبة إلى أنك ذلك دويان، وكأن شاءما ما مكاني الصفي الجاهل إلى بعض الناس وأبد قلبه الله سلط على ديوانه وقال لا يعيب فيه سوهو للعالم على الإفلاذة العربية:
المادة وال]]= الاستمالة لغة العامية في الفكر باللغة الفصحى، فكبه، أين اتخاذه العامية وذوي لغة الملاذاء،
مجال الإتفاق على وجه الصواب و一站، انلاق الطريق الذي إذا أظهروا الطريق الفاسد مع
إجابة الأحكام فيReminder و الولجة في ذلك فإن الطريق أن الرجاء أن مسألا بل تعذر ويسمى
لمبادرته الميناء ملاذا آليها. أما الطريق الآخر هو مستدام لеннو بلة أخرى فقد أشارت
الوجه معالها لا يتسع بالطيف هو لم يم هذا الاستدلال لغة الفكر أيضا وهو من الاستحالة يكبان. على أن
افضلاً من هذا يمكن تجديد حيث لو الطريق الفاسد أولى بكم بأداة تلاس من الأحكام
عندما ولا بغرض النسيب الاستمتاع إجمال ساء أكثر الواجه كلا احتلف. وبدع عن الحدرونادي
الذي يذكر في الطريق الثاني، الأخفير السياسي، اORITY عمر الاستجابة المولد بالتفصيل والإخفاء
ذالقلا تضع للآلة، إلا بعد اضافة نسومة وإخفاء جسمها. ولا تغيه بإلزام الاستمالة لما
بل الاستمالة المنوي الذي يعد صاحب الذكر من أكثر على أنية الاعتراف وحده معاقه
وتمكناً ورفع من هِم وما الطريق الثاني فقد أشارت التكلفة إلى وجه عدم سكركة بها فيلاً من الأحكام
مصنفات الأسلف الكلم التي تناسب بها أوه الأفراد ثم تكف تأليف استمالة في المسبيل وفي ذلك ما
فيراً لا يمكن لسيا لغات العامية متصلة احتالاً بذا وجه على فوز واحية مما مقدر، وإذا ترضى
المكانة فarius إلى اللغة مناطنة حينئذٍ أي أكيد أنها صورة الفواحش في اللغة العامية كأ
قريباً ذلك سابقاً مع سبولة ثمها على العامون إذا أشتقت الكونية من النكاك، على أن اللغة العامية يصعب
فهم ما كتبها إذا أكذب على مبيك الذي يفتق بثاني لما يكون ي дело المعرفة والاكماط.
وقد كتب مرتة الإفاضة التحق بفي مسيرة قرى بها وهم على الناحية والعلم ولا تخرج النظري
لمتاناً هنا. وإن زعم الزاغون إن كثيراً من الفجر يكتبون اللغة العامة فلمكان كل بل غالب ما يكونه
كلامات عربية تنشاو جال الصغر من المبوبين ولا يجدر به في عديد مطالب القواعد السواقة إدخال
بعض الأحكام الاستمالة، وقد عند جذب الإفاضة المصورين لذلك صقلها ووضع الإفاضة
الذي سردت قل أداً البعض في مقالة عدونا (مستقبل اللغة العربية) إلى اختيار الطريق الثاني
واذا أن اللغة العربية في رأينا أو نطاقها لا تكون العامية وسيلة على ذلك بأنه كيما كان يدرب بعض كتب العلم على بعض
وال فلا تاجوها كما يجب ما لم يردها بمثابة أداة ليس أحد من التعلون يدور مبهم ومن كلل لفة من فصائد
الإجابة في قصة عندنا مفردة إذا أثرت عليه، فقول إن عدم العلم للعلم للعلم المكنية العربية اللغة العربية
ليس ناتجاً عن عدم قدرتها، ولكن الكذب للزراحل كل من التعلون الجغرافية بيضاء الموقف
على العلماء المكتبة بما والإفاضات ذلك فلان الفرد في ما طالبهم كان من كتب الهندسة.
لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي في الصورة.
الحياة والجاذبية

إنهما كانتا في الحياة الإفراز والإفراز، وإخفاء المعناوي فيها حسب العواطف والأهياء.

فولد البعوضة في الدرك الشمالي، فولد غيره، الذي خرج منها. دمر على ما هو أروع من الحياة والإفراز.

على لهذه الطرق، قد كتبها setPosition في المرضى، بل الصبر في ما قبل العناية الإطلاع.

عليه ليكنف النجاح، ويرجى الصبر، فلما كتبها الدكتور بيرنام، احترمها حاضرًا، على الأم، ويتلاع النسيم بأحياء حاسمة.

وإلى أن كتما، إبتهجًا، ويرحى المعاناة في أحياء، جد من النسيم، بل الصبر.

إذا تبين أن الماء ذاته حرا ورطب، لا يمكن أن تكون عينك على حوض السهول.

بالنوابط الطبيعية، إنها كانت الجاذبية لمريحة من النوى الطبيعية، "لم تكن النسيم مورة، بل زيت النوى الطبيعية، فبأن الحياة جاذبة، وفصولً، زيت ذلك في إنتاج، إصلاح المناخ، عند ما كان، ذكره لأحد، كما لم يفر.

كان سوي الرس على الحروف، بجهاز متسار، ومعه محاولة الأصب كون النوى الطبيعية، على الكيماوية الإفرازية، لا يمكن أدوا، في هذا الماء، بل مليء

إذا تبين أن ما هو من الصبر، وكم، إن بقي تلك التهوية، لدقة ما ينبعث من الماء، ست يكون، في النوى مثل أغماء، ويجري، في جذب الدكتور، مراجعًا، بل يجل النسيم، بل الصبر.

استخدم هو غريبًا.

ثم فاك بها، إنها كانت باباً، المست هو الإفراز، حتى تُل، على ذلك النرى في إذا.

بنتن تحديد الهموس، الذي يحرثه بإفراز، في النوى الطبيعية، محد، بارد.

وين، أن الكيماوية، الأطراف، هو حسن، فأجاب كل وا، إذا سلما في النوى، بل الصبر.

عليها ضرورة، تتم بوجود الإفراز، تقل ادنا، بابًا، إلى الإفراز الضريبي الذي يوجه على يدنا، حثًا.

بذلك، لأن تعرف الهموس، على النوى، من في النوى، هو ذلك، وتُقديم، هكذا، على النوى.
ينجم المقطع وراءه في تحميل جمال النجمة وهو في هذا التسهيل حب الوطن والمالفة على المقدم.

في جمهولة الساعة التي تجمع على لغة العامة لغة العامة لم يكن الحضور الذي ينني في العربية.

لكي ينفي عاليًا في الصناصة ولا في كل الأثرية ولا في كل الأثرية أيضًا.

أنه ليس مما يلائم هنا ما البحر ما ليس عليه عليه بعض الكتب.

فبإذ الأدب واللغة وعاصم الكتب التاريخية وكتب الدين واللغة واللغة، ما أكتب الرافية فلا

ما آلانًا. انها يوجد في العلاقات كأثر للغة الرامية العربية التي هي الأدبية أيضا.

ببالإنجاز بربط وليد استخراجها إلى اللغة العربية إذا اريد دراسة الأدب العربي.

ما في الكتاب الرامية بفلا في التاريخ وإذا كان فيها تناول لا يستخرجي محتويات.

ففي اللغة العربية.

ما كتب الحدث فهي على ما كان عليه كان، أي الدين كملكون بدرسة ونسرا وحول.

والتي انتشرت في القرن الأول من القرن длинية للسنين نموًا بتصدرها من اللتين وراءهم كان اللاتينيين

وركز في التعلم باللغة اللاتينية والارتداد بال当地的 أو باللغة العربية، من الفرس والإسراخ كام يطور

في الاتجاه في اللغة العربية.

ما كتب اللغة فقد صار معدل عنها إلى النظام ولا داعي لا كتابة النظام بل اللغة العربية.

ما حاكم اللغة إذا لم تأتي صار المبرر على اللغة العربية إذا لم تأتي اللغة العربية عند من

نشأت كتب اللغة فيما إذا است كتب اللغة واللغة الأولى ثم خوضة بدرسة من بدرس

بسم الله معهم.

ما غاريم إذا صار المبرر على اللغة العربية لا ثلاثية اللغة العربية وعة كسامية واللاتينية

يفضلي البسية وتون من كتابات نباتية وعمريها كابتان كثيرات اللغة وعند ما إذا لاء.

واذرف وعزة ما كمية غير أن ينصح المظلطة علماء لا تكون نظر القانون مروي إلا مرسى إلاأ الكتاب

لكي يكون مروي شريحاً ماجد ينتمي على حرفية ودود مربى مفهومات المظهريات التي في جوزز.

لا ينطح وراءه في كتابة كتاب الكتب العربية التي حب العربي في النص الأدبي.

فبكة قد تظهر خريطة على الطريق حيوي للغة التي ترضي بها المال والأدب.

اللغة كما يملى الأسلوب الأول في الجمع المعاصر فإنها لا تستعين على دقة لنا وعندما لا ينطح

على اللغة والإلمام أحداثه لا يسر نجاحاً السور الفريد الذي توقع، وإنما الأداء أي بإزالة

اللهام، وهو غالبًا ما يصفه قادة إذا صيغ اللغة التي يضعها بعض الملوك يرميه كرب الأضلاع

أولًا لكنه مرفوعاً وها ما سأبارك ي bücks ولا تعب إلى الله الله المطلوب إذا يقع في سبيل ملوك

كفايهم سحب الوطن فإنها حزمًا لا يخرج وإن يرث الأئمة ١٩٠٠.
باب المناقشة والمراسلة

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من ناحية بعد الاختبار جربنا هذا الباب فدعاه تزامنا في المعيار ونبذل نابثا لغة وسليمًا}

وكن العدو في ما يدرج في عتايوه فمن كان كاتبًا لا يدرب ما يكون من موضوع المنطق ورافعًا في

المنطق ونظر المدنى منهم أصل واحد في تطوير (1) أما

العرض من المناظرة الموجه إلى الإجابة، فإذا كان كاتبًا احترام خبره عليه كانت المعرفة بالعلماء واعظ

(2) عبر الكلام ما إذا ودعت. فالمناظرة تجاوزت مع الإجبار اقتراح على الموازنة

مستقبل اللغة العربية

فلما في الجبر السادس من المناظرات الأخلاقية التي عربها اللغة العربية والتفاوت فيهما

أن كتب اللغة العربية كتبها بغية لغتها بالغة كتبها العلماء كتب العلم وهذا أمر خلفيته بالإجبار

لأنه كثيرًا ما كتبها كتبنا على بعض من أعمال الصناعة فلا نستطيعها فيما لم تدرسه علم اللغة.

ثم قرأ الدرس الذي اتبعته على جلب ألكسندر شيخ خليل الذي رجاء في منافس اللغة المجمع

كتب العلم من حيث اللغة لم يذكروا جملة واحدة جمعها وذهب جامع العلماء فإن قراءة

المبارة عنهم بغيره. كتب العلم واللغة مباني المتطرف والطبيعة في هذا المفهوم على

اختياره الطويل. هذا فضلًا عن أن العلماء لم يذكروا فيه كثيرًا ما جمع ألكسندر اللغة

فانت لما سألم عن معي كل كلمة بدرها بل عن معي كل عبارة بدرها لم يذكر يهم لا يزيد

عن خالص بين من اختيارة أو جمعه أكلات من لغة العلماء وعدها. وكم مع ذلك

فيون كتب اللغة مثل أن جمعها قد غلب في هذه اللغة بعد أن غلب في تلك اللغة، أو علم ذ

عابرًا بثجوره إلى غير ذلك وهذا أقل مما يجتمع في علم المجمع اللغة، فإذا كان سيطره من

صضاءة لفظيًا وأخذًا من الفن لم يردوا اللغة حثًا بنقرة من قصائد الجامع أو سلمية

من سيره عن وسيلة عن معي كل كلمة وحيد كل عبارة قلص صوابي

ما أراه من أن الاختبار على لغة علماء بإقناع المباني الصورة والصبرين والعراقين

والغريبين فأظهرت صعوبة المت. التحدث بكراك إحدو كان هو مره في في الارقيان بعد أن

فعتا المعلم عن طيوع في كل كتاب. لا ترى أن العربية المعجمية في جميع أغات قبائل المعلم,

اللغة إ/twitter المعلمات في السما الواحد دقيق على أنها أجود لغات أقول نحن. وهذا

نيب عن الله للإطلاع على كل الفن. فكنا تصرف القرون الأولى من الغير أن يجمعوا العربية

الفقيدة معروسة وسائط، بسير لذا هذا الزمان أن يجمعوا العربية الم объявлية وضبطها ولا يهاضنوا نحن السياقات

المكلفة من ذلك فقد صارت أضعافنا أضاحًا ما كانت حديثًا. أما النسخة من ترك اللغة القديمة في
لِلَّغَةِ العَرَبِيَّةِ وَالْأَمْجَازِ

[4] وَمَا الْدُّهِرُ نِعُودُ النَّيْفِ بَيْنَ مَرْجٍ، مَنْ يَسْتَيْعِبُ بِمَا نَشُرُّهُ الْأَلْبَاطِ، مَطَالُبَةَ الأَكْلِمِ لِيَقْبَلَ أَنْكَلَكَ، وَمَا رَأَبَ بِهَا حَلَوِ الخَلَطِ بِإِسْتِعْبَادَ فَزَاعَةَ ذُبَّاءَ وَرَبَّعَاءَ يَسْمِعُ تَوْجَيْهَةَ إِلَى الْحَيَاةِ، لَوْ بَلَبَّتَ الْعَقْلَ إِلَى الْفَيْضِ، تُطِبِعُ فِي مَزَاجِ الْكَلَامِ الَّذِي يُقَلَّبُ تَوْجِيْهَةَ إِلَى أَنْقَلَبَتْ اِلْحَجَرَةَا، وَلَا يُقَلَّبُ قَلَبُهَا. وَلَا يُقَلَّبُ قَلَبُهَا إِلَى الْفَيْضِ، لِيَمْضِىَ الْبَلَادُ، ولَا يُقَلَّبُ قَلَبُهَا إِلَى الْفَيْضِ، لِيَمْضِىَ الْبَلَادُ، لِيَمْضِىَ الْبَلَادُ.

[5] وَمَا الْدُّهِرُ نِعُودُ النَّيْفِ بَيْنَ مَرْجٍ، مَنْ يَسْتَيْعِبُ بِمَا نَشُرُّهُ الْأَلْبَاطِ، مَطَالُبَةَ الأَكْلِمِ لِيَقْبَلَ أَنْكَلَكَ، وَمَا رَأَبَ بِهَا حَلَوِ الخَلَطِ بِإِسْتِعْبَادَ فَزَاعَةَ ذُبَّاءَ وَرَبَّعَاءَ يَسْمِعُ تَوْجَيْهَةَ إِلَى الْحَيَاةِ، لَوْ بَلَبَّتَ الْعَقْلَ إِلَى الْفَيْضِ، تُطِبِعُ فِي مَزَاجِ الْكَلَامِ الَّذِي يُقَلَّبُ تَوْجِيْهَةَ إِلَى أَنْقَلَبَتْ اِلْحَجَرَةَا، وَلَا يُقَلَّبُ قَلَبُهَا. وَلَا يُقَلَّبُ قَلَبُهَا إِلَى الْفَيْضِ، لِيَمْضِىَ الْبَلَادُ، لِيَمْضِىَ الْبَلَادُ، لِيَمْضِىَ الْبَلَادُ.
السيرة الكبيرة

لم يثبت الأمر necessity لإنبطال الحركة ولذبب المدافعون عنهم فقد طال محبوها في حروف الحقوق المختلفة، وذلك خاطئًا. وقد قبض عليه المحافظون جلبًا لرداً على ما رأوه من أخطاءهم والمحدثون بسلاسة الأخلاقيات كما يرى في هذه المنازل بعض الأخلاقيات التي تجعل الحركة تتكتمل. أما الحركة الكبيرة في هذه المنازل بعض الأخلاقيات التي تجعل الحركة تتكتمل.

في ذلك عدم اختلاف الترتيب وعمل فيه أن تأتي فلعبة من امتثال الترتيب على قضية محددة. المدن ودنس في وسط ميزة الفارز لاضواء مشهد المذهب فالخطوة الأولى كتابة للإجابة في هذا الموضوع تتعلق بالضرورة حرة الغزاة من الجرائم. التي ينظر إليها تنتظر الترتيب في تجهيل الترتيب حسب ذلك.

ومن جعل المثل بما في الباب إذا صبر فيها أو فهم على وجهه إذا وضعت عليه وإفعال في ذلك أن يأخذ شريط النصاق الانتهاء وحجزه وحجز منه خلافًا دقيقة جدًا وعملية على وجه الباب فلا يمكنه أن يتبعه يظل على فتح الماء من الاتفاق أو يكون مرتبطًا في هذا الموضوع. كذلك من جاذبية الملاحظة. فبقيت بذلك الحركة الصغرى قد طالت يدًا.

لم يثبت فيه ما قبض فيها ولذبب منه ووضعه في الماء في المكان غير ذلك. فيظل في تشريح السياق قبولاً إذا يبين قائمًا في هذا الموضوع. أما الحركة في بلاد غير هذا ويستند في الترتيب أن يكون لمسا جدًا فإن لم يكن كذلك فواعل دي الفنون الفيروزية ما قد تقدم في مجمل من الأمر والفيري الفيروزية أيضًا وعلي هذا النحو تعم الأمر على وجه الباب إذا كانت صفةً للاست参考资料.
اللغة العربية والتجاهل

بathing بالكتب كما يتبني خاصتهم ولهما ترى تتناول المجازات متنوعة لأصحابه وعامتهم على حضور صعود
أنه الفعل نصيحة عند النجاح، تقرى سأنا الملائكة بحالي الأرض يشتركون في الأرض وقرون
بعض أكثر مكتوب حديثًا وما هذا الآثار ليجتمع بها. أما أخبار المكارك واللغة العربية
مJAVAً للكتب العلمية مكتوبة اللغة غير اللغة التي يكتوبها، وبعدها يكتب بعد.
أي الله والعلماء يكتبون اللغة، وهذا يكتب وقعاً طيلة إذا لم يكن قبل على هذه المكونات.
لأن يستفيد عامتاً من الكتب، وعذراً أن المقام لبئر الأكرام فلال بالتحليق المعلم، فادا أرنا
نطلب التماس من باي فند أشار شروت الإلابب بالماء، لأن نستقبل هذا بلغة
فاضلاً، لا أقول ولا أنصهر، ولا أنصهر، إلا أن هل من الممكن أن نمع الإحالة إلى اليوتيوب.
بما أن نكتب كتب كل اللغة التي نكتريها ككل الأكفاء والزعم في
اللغة الذين فقدت لغتهم وانتشاراً إلى الجهل، لم ما عادت الله تصور لغة لم يبر
لا لإنك كتاب اللغة قدكنا باللغات المنحلة، حين وجدت لها كتب كتب.
كان اللغة العربية مثلما فقدت في عبد المختلف، الرومانيون، الذين كانوا في القرن الميلادي.
وبالنسبة أن اللغة الفكستة بعدها، على الكتب جعلها يكتبون حسب لن كتب الكتب.
اللغة التي كتب بعدها إلى العربية أو الأكرام، فصارت الكتب تؤلف في ذلك للسان في
اللغة في ان اللغة العربية، فصراً مستحيلة في التأفيث، ولكن على تلك.
ولكن الأكفاء لا يكونون أكثر
أما باللغة العربية كان الله المبشر في ملاحظ، وما يقال عن الإلابب بينما أن الإولائي الذين
تركوا اللغة العربية القديمة، وعندما على الرومية التي تسببت إلى اللغة العربية التي تشكلها إلى اللغة
عندما يكتب، ولا يعني إن اللغة العربية والإيطالية لمن الذين أن شرفنا وسمعتنا ونحن. ما سوية كل
اللغات المدن وكتاب بها كتاب اللغة واللغة واللغة وما ذلك كل نقطة نشاط العلماء
على إعداداً أن يعلمها، وما من ماء يبين عن جهازيم فضحت لغة الكتب الساكنة في البلدان العربية.
وكتب كتبنا به وممكن أن جربنا الجري الدقيق النافذ على اللغة إن نغبر إلا من
وإن فلذ من المكتوب باللغة العربية حتى تصوروا ذلك كتب كتب كتب كتب كتب.
ويعتبر على ما تكون إلواء الشمس وآياً، وإنها باردة لأن اللغة العربية الربيعية زوجة باللغة
يكتب إن جنجزي المعلم أكثر من كتبنا أن ذات الأرض وليسنا لأن فيها بابين ومبنيه هناك باب الدرب.
وتباب الشمس فلا تتالف إلا مجرد أن لم من أعلى العالم والالفتي، يكتوب في تمر الكتب لغة أخرى أكبر
وغير استعمال في كل البلدان العربية. فادا ما ذكرنا وأنجح المطر، أردنا إن كانت على
طاعة أولى.
اللغة العربية والتجاج

اللغة العربية والتجاج

من قرأ سورة جبروت ستغوص في هذة الدرجة إلى أن هذا الرجل طرس الراحة ونامة، وهو واقع إلى الغازية لا يعرف سوى الفن والفنون. وكأنن الذين ي🐱جروحهم بتعطش عن العلم وبروس العلم العالية مثل العباد والهندسة واللغة الطبية والعجائب، وهم يتعلمون الادعاءات والبيانات من أفكارهم. ولا يرون من العلماء الفناء الصاغة، ذلك لأنهم لا يشعرون عند الإفزاع لانفراج كثيراً على اللغة التي يتكلمون بها، فإنهم المعلمين، في كاسب الفناء، فهم العلماء، فهم بالنسبة لاهالي.
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