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Becoming the *Muʿallim*: how tradition and innovation made a *Nahḍa* icon

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Abstract

One cannot speak of the nineteenth-century Beirut *Nahḍa* and not mention *Muʿallim* Buṭrus al-Bustānī (1819–83). This article examines how al-Bustānī utilized the Arabic oratorical tradition and the innovative medium of print to create the *Muʿallim* brand. The first section analyses his *Khuṭba fī Ādāb al-ʿArab* (An Oration on the Culture of the Arabs, 1859) to illustrate how he operationalized the Arabic rhetorical style to position himself as an eloquent public intellectual. This article next discusses how he built parts of this lecture on *sariqāt* (literary thefts/legitimate borrowings) from his contemporaries and participated in the collective practice of knowledge production. Lastly, al-Bustānī's advertising tactics in print to promote his public persona are explored. This article demonstrates that al-Bustānī successfully established himself as the *Muʿallim* by coupling the enduring cultural power of Arabic oration with the modern might of print.

Keywords: Arabic; The Beirut *Nahḍa*; Buṭrus al-Bustānī; Oration; Print; Rhetoric

Buṭrus al-Bustānī (1819–83) is synonymous with the nineteenth-century Beirut *Nahḍa*. He opened the first transconfessional school, established several periodicals, actively participated in learned societies, argued for a civil society based on a shared cultural heritage, authored a modern Arabic dictionary, and compiled the first Arabic encyclopaedia. For his contributions to education, journalism, language, and society, historians label him "A man ahead of his time" and "The spirit of the age".[1] The man himself, however, elected *Muʿallim* (Teacher/Master) – an epithet that now appears inseparable from his name. This article examines how al-Bustānī created the *Muʿallim* brand by utilizing the Arabic oratorical tradition and the innovative medium of print.

The *Nahḍa* is "a loose construct with a range of meanings", as Ayalon pithily stated.[2] There is no scholarly consensus on how to translate the term which broadly "implies an awareness of the dynamic process of social, cultural and political change that the

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[1] Adel Beshara (ed.), *Butrus al-Bustani: Spirit of the Age* (Melbourne: IPhoenix Publishing, 2014) and Yūsuf Quzmā Khūrī, *Rajul Sābiq li-ʿAṣrih: al-Muʿallim Buṭrus al-Bustānī, 1819–1883* (Beirut: Bīsān, 1995).

[2] Ami Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution: Cultural Production and Mass Readership* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 18.

Arab region underwent during the nineteenth century".[3] "Awakening" is used to describe the upsurge in Arabic cultural production alongside the rise of Arab nationalist political activity.[4] "Renaissance" is also dispatched to stylize the literary efflorescence and secularizing reforms of the period.[5] "Modernity" has recently entered the nomenclatural mélange to explicate the practices, policies, and postures of the thinkers, merchants, scholars, and politicians of the period.[6] Accepting the limits (and the minefield) of translation, this article values the multivalent nature of the era and leaves the Arabic term *Nahḍa* untranslated.[7]

Beirut was an epicentre of the *Nahḍa* and experienced profound social, economic, political, and cultural changes in the nineteenth century. Its population exploded from several thousand to over one hundred thousand,[8] and the coastal town expanded beyond its historic walls and grew into a modern cosmopolitan capital. Foreign consulates were headquartered in the city and cultural institutions, such as schools and presses, were established. Merchants conducted international business at the ports, while intellectuals discussed the past, present, and future at literary-scientific associations. In 1888 the Ottoman Sultan created the Province of Beirut, formalizing the newfound prominence of the city.[9] As the hub of transformations at all levels, Beirut epitomized the experimental and experiential aspects of the *Nahḍa*, which El-Ariss summarized as "the project of Arab cultural and political modernity".[10]

Buṭrus al-Bustānī was "the privileged product of [this] transitional age".[11] Born to a Maronite family in Dibbiyeh (30 km south of Beirut) in 1819, the future *Muʿallim* studied at the reputable Maronite College of ʿAyn Waraqa. In 1840 he moved to Beirut where he commenced a lifelong association with the American Protestant missionaries. Al-Bustānī

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[3] Abdulrazzak Patel, *The Arab* Nahḍah: *The Making of the Intellectual and Humanist Movement* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), x. See Hannah Scott Deuchar, "'Nahḍa': mapping a keyword in cultural discourse", *Alif* 37, 2017, 50–84.

[4] George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* (London: H. Hamilton, 1938) and Peter E. Pormann, "The Arab 'Cultural Awakening (*Nahḍa*)', 1870–1950, and the classical tradition", *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 13/1, 2006, 3–20. Interestingly, the Arabic translation of Antonius' *The Arab Awakening* is titled *Yaqaẓat al-ʿArab* and not "Nahḍat al-ʿArab". *Yaqaẓat al-ʿArab: Tārīkh Ḥarakat al-ʿArab al-Qawmiyya*, trans. ʿAlī Ḥaydar al-Rikābī (Damascus: Maṭbaʿat al-Taraqqī, 1946).

[5] Tarek El-Ariss (ed.), *The Arab Renaissance: A Bilingual Anthology of the* Nahda (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2018) and Deanna Ferree Womack, *Protestants, Gender and the Arab Renaissance in Late Ottoman Syria* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019). Tomiche noted that "Renaissance" is "a problematic translation" because it implicitly sets sixteenth-century Europe as the referential standard. Nada Tomiche, "Nahḍa", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, P. Bearman et al. (eds), accessed 7 May 2022, https://referenceworks-brillonline-com.ezproxy.wlu.edu/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/*-SIM_5751

[6] C. Ceyhun Arslan, "Ambivalences of Ottoman modernity: Nahda, Tanzimat, and world literature" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2017); Hala Auji, *Printing Arab Modernity: Book Culture and The American Press in Nineteenth-Century Beirut* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); Tarek El-Ariss, *Trials of Arab Modernity: Literary Affects and the New Political* (Fordham, NY: Fordham University Press, 2013); and David Fieni, *Decadent Orientalisms: The Decay of Colonial Modernity* (Fordham, NY: Fordham University Press, 2020).

[7] Tarek El-Ariss, "Let there be *Nahdah*!", *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 2/2, 2015, 260–6; Peter Hill, *Utopia and Civilisation in the Arab Nahda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Patel, *The Arab* Nahḍah; and Stephen Sheehi, "The 10-point *Nahdah* manifesto", in Lucian Stone and Jason Bahbak Mohaghegh (eds), *Manifestos for World Thought* (London: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2017), 131–45.

[8] Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 28–43.

[9] Jens Hanssen, *Fin de Siècle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Provincial Capital* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) and Fruma Zachs, *The Making of a Syrian Identity: Intellectuals and Merchants in Nineteenth Century Beirut* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

[10] El-Ariss (ed.), *The Arab Renaissance*, xv.

[11] Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 212.

soon converted to Protestantism and acquired English. He capitalized on his American connections and bilingualism, securing employment as a missionary educator and translator and as a dragoman at the American Consulate. In the late 1850s he began to separate himself from the missionaries, although not from Protestantism, and to focus his energies exclusively on cultural projects. In 1859 he delivered *Khuṭba fī Ādāb al-ʿArab* (An Oration on the Culture of the Arabs), a critique of Arab society and civilization past and present. Regarded as a "foundational discourse" of the *Nahḍa*,[12] it was a major life event that enabled al-Bustānī to exhibit his intellectual and literary mettle and introduce Beirut to *Muʿallim* Buṭrus.

Etymologically, a *muʿallim* is someone who transmits *ʿilm* (knowledge). He is a teacher or master, a skilled practitioner of his craft. In the Arab-Islamic philosophical tradition, the great teachers of society Aristotle (d. 322 BCE) and al-Fārābī (d. 950) are known as the First *Muʿallim* and the Second *Muʿallim*, respectively.[13] Many Muslims correspondingly call Muhammad (d. 632) *Muʿallim*, in reverence for his spiritual and moral teachings.[14] Arabic speakers in the nineteenth century used the title in various official and ordinary contexts. The master craftsman who managed a workshop, trained apprentices, and employed journeymen was called a *muʿallim*.[15] There was also *muʿallim al-dīwān* (the master of the chancellery) at the court of governors and princes.[16] These master scribes were well-educated men who chronicled events and composed poetry, like Ibrāhīm al-ʿAwra (1796–1863) and Buṭrus Karāma (1774–1851).[17] *Muʿallim* remained a professional epithet for schoolteachers, such as Saʿīd al-Shartūnī (1849–1912) and Shākir Shuqayr (1850–96).[18] Al-Bustānī emerged from this cohort, first as a *muʿallim* (teacher) at his alma mater of ʿAyn Waraqa and then for the American missionaries in Beirut who celebrated the fact that he was "a good teacher of Arabic literature".[19]

As the socioeconomic landscape of Ottoman Syria[20] shifted in the nineteenth century, so too did the usage of titles.[21] Foreigners and local Christians used *khawājā*, while *sayyid*,

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[12] Stephen Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2004), 19.

[13] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Why was al-Fārābī called the second teacher?", *Islamic Culture* 59/4, 1985, 357.

[14] ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghudda, *al-Rasūl al-Muʿallim wa-Asālībuh fī l-Taʿlīm* (Aleppo: Maktab al-Maṭbūʿāt al-Islāmiyya), 1996 and Sami Yusuf, *al-muʿallim*, Awakening Records, 2003, compact disc.

[15] Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Making a living or making a fortune in Ottoman Syria", in Nelly Hanna (ed.), *Money, Land and Trade: An Economic History of the Muslim Mediterranean* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 103–4 and James A. Reilly, "From workshops to sweatshops: Damascus textiles and the world-economy in the last Ottoman century", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 16/2, 1993, 199–213. The contemporary use of *muʿallim* in slang with the meaning of "boss", a term popularized by Saad Lamjarred in his 2015 record-setting song "Lm3allem", perhaps emerged from the title *muʿallim* as a "master craftsman". "Saad Lamjarred new song earns Guinness World Record achievement", *Morocco World News*, 27 May 2015, accessed 21 Nov. 2021, https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2015/05/159460/saad-lamjarred-new-song-earns-guinness-world-record-achievement

[16] Thomas Philipp, "Class, community, and Arab historiography in the early nineteenth century – the dawn of a new era", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16/2, 1984, 161–75.

[17] Ibrāhīm al-ʿAwra, *Tārīkh Wilāyat Sulaymān Bāshā al-ʿĀdil*, ed. Qisṭanṭīn al-Bāshā al-Mukhalliṣī (Sidon: Maṭbaʿat Dayr al-Mukhalliṣ, 1936), cover and *Sajʿ al-Ḥamāma, aw Dīwān al-Maghfūr la-hu al-Muʿallim Buṭrus al-Karāma* (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Adabiyya, 1898), cover.

[18] Shākir Shuqayr, *Miṣbāḥ al-Afkār fī Naẓm al-Ashʿār* (Beirut: Maṭbaʿat al-Maʿārif, 1873), cover and Jirmānūs Farḥāt, *Baḥth al-Maṭālib fī ʿIlm al-ʿArabiyya*, ed. Saʿīd al-Shartūnī (Beirut: Jesuit Press, 1882), cover. Al-Shartūnī taught in Beirut, Damascus, and Cairo while Shuqayr was a teacher at many schools in Beirut, including al-Bustānī's *Waṭaniyya* School. Abdulrazzak Patel, "Reviving the past: al-Shartūnī's *Kitāb al-Maṭāliʿ* and the theory of compilation in the *Nahḍah*", *Journal of Arabic Literature* 40, 2009, 73 and Philippe Tarrazi, *Tārīkh al-Ṣiḥāfa al-ʿArabiyya*, vol. 2 (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Adabiyya, 1913), 188–9.

[19] *The Missionary Herald* 37/7, 1841, 303.

[20] Syria here refers to the region historically considered to be *bilād al-shām*, i.e. the Levant.

[21] James A. Reilly, "Status and propertyholding in Damascus hinterland, 1828–1880", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 21/4, 1989, 517–39.

which had been reserved for descendants of the Prophet, acquired the pedestrian meaning of "mister". *Shaykh* and *ḥājj* remained honorifics for elders and local nobility, and "a generation of self-consciously modern and middle-class-claiming men" became *efendi*.[22] Some individuals kept their existing titles,[23] while others wedded modern signifiers to traditional designations, like the Sunni poet, businessman, and civil servant "Sayyid Ḥusayn *Efendi* Bayhum (1833–81)".[24] Professional sobriquets developed new connotations. The master craftsman *muʿallim* became a "merchant-entrepreneur" (*muʿallim al-kār*), as he picked up more administrative and commercial responsibilities.[25] *Muʿallim* Nicola Saig (1863–1942) transformed from a craftsman of iconography into a master artist of allegory which communicated national identity.[26] In parallel, al-Bustānī translated his professional rank of language master into that of public pedagogue.

The literary community in Beirut acknowledged "*Muʿallim* Buṭrus al-Bustānī" as such during his lifetime,[27] and in his obituary both Christian and Muslim newspapers prefixed the title to his proper name.[28] Arab chroniclers continued this practice in their early compendia of the *Nahḍa*.[29] The American missionary Henry Harris Jessup (1832–1910) likewise remembered him as "Muallim Butrus El Bistany [*sic*]".[30] The epithet was used consistently in Arabic scholarship throughout the twentieth century[31] but has been underscored in English only recently.[32]

This article contends that Buṭrus al-Bustānī instrumentalized old and new modalities of knowledge production to create the *Muʿallim* brand: an imprimatur that stood for literary innovations and cultural commodities. I first focus on oratory and analyse his 1859 *Khuṭba fī Ādāb al-ʿArab* (An Oration on the Culture of the Arabs; hereafter *Khuṭba*) to illustrate how he operationalized the Arabic rhetorical style to position himself as a public intellectual. His skilful appropriation of material from contemporaries is discussed next. Here I

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[22] Lucie Ryzova, *The Age of the Efendiyya: Passages to Modernity in National-Colonial Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 4–5.

[23] From their days at the court of Prince Bashīr al-Shihābī II (1767–1850), the physician and local historian Mīkhāʾīl Mishāqa retained the title *muʿallim* while the philologist Nāṣif al-Yāzijī kept the inherited honorific of *shaykh*. Mīkhāʾīl Mishāqa, *Kashf al-Niqāb ʿan Wajh al-Masīḥ al-Kadhdhāb* (Beirut: n.p., 1860), cover; Nāṣif al-Yāzijī, *Nubdha min Dīwān al-Shaykh Nāṣif al-Yāzijī* (Beirut: n.p., 1853), cover; and Zachs, *The Making of a Syrian Identity*, 31.

[24] *Ḥadīqat al-Akhbār* [= *ḤA*] 3/112, 23 Feb. 1860.

[25] Reilly, "From workshops to sweatshops", 209.

[26] Stephen Sheehi, "Before painting: Nicola Saig, painting and photographic seeing", in Sarah Rogers and Eline van der Vlist (eds), *Arab Art Histories: The Khalid Shoman Collection* (Amsterdam: Idea Books, 2013), 361–74.

[27] Warda al-Yāzijī, *Ḥadīqat al-Ward* (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Mukhalliṣiyya, 1867), 36; Ibrāhīm al-Aḥdab, *al-Nafḥ al-Miskī fī Shiʿr al-Bayrūtī* (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-ʿUmūmiyya, 1868), 192; and *ḤA* 2/93, 13 Oct. 1859.

[28] "Taʾbīn *al-Taqaddum*" and "Taʾbīn *Thamarāt al-Funūn*", *al-Jinān* 14/10, 15 May 1883, 291–2 and "al-Marḥūm al-Muʿallim Buṭrus al-Bustānī", *al-Muqtaṭaf* 8/1, Aug. 1883, 1–7.

[29] Louis Cheikho, *al-Ādāb al-ʿArabiyya fī l-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ ʿAshar*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Jesuit Press, 1924), 132; Yūsuf Ilyās Sarkīs, *Muʿjam al-Maṭbūʿāt al-ʿArabiyya wal-Muʿarraba* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Sarkīs, 1928): 557; Tarrazi, *Tārīkh al-Ṣiḥāfa al-ʿArabiyya*, 1: 54, 1: 64, and 1: 89; and Jurjī Zaydān, *Tarājim Mashāhīr al-Sharq fī l-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ ʿAshar*, vol. 2 (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Hilāl, 1903), 24.

[30] Henry Harris Jessup, *Fifty-Three Years in Syria*, vol. 2 (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1910), 483.

[31] Fuʾād Afram al-Bustānī, *al-Muʿallim Buṭrus al-Bustānī: Taʿlīm al-Nisāʾ [wa-]Ādāb al-ʿArab* (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Kāthulīkiyya, 1929); Jān Dāyah, *al-Muʿallim Buṭrus al-Bustānī: Dirāsa wal-Wathāʾiq* (Beirut: al-Mashriq lil-Ṭibāʿa wal-Nashr, 1981); Mīkhāʾīl Ṣawāyā, *al-Muʿallim Buṭrus al-Bustānī: Dirāsa* (Beirut: Maktabat al-Bustānī, 1963); and ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Ṭībāwī, "al-Muʿallim Buṭrus al-Bustānī: Ḥaqāʾiq jadīda ʿanuh wa-baʿḍ rasāʾilih lam tunshar", *Majallat Majmaʿ al-Lugha al-ʿArabiyya bi-Dimashq* 45/3, 1970, 597–9.

[32] Stephen Paul Sheehi, "Inscribing the Arab self: Buṭrus al-Bustānī and paradigms of subjective reform", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 27/1, 2000, 8, p. 8, n. 4 and n. 8; and Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, 16–17, 33, and 39. Chejne noted that al-Bustānī was "known as the teacher (*muʿallim*)" (Anwar G. Chejne, *The Arabic Language: Its Role in History* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 132).

spotlight *sariqāt* (literary thefts/legitimate borrowings) in the oration to show how he introduced rhetorical flair to the words of his peers and participated in the collective practice of knowledge production. Lastly, I explore how he used the novel medium of print and developed advertising tactics to increase his visibility and establish himself in the burgeoning literary market of Beirut.

I argue that al-Bustānī created his status as the *Muʿallim* of the Beirut *Nahḍa* by coupling the enduring cultural power of the Arabic oratorical tradition with the modern "revolutionary" might of print.[33] The delivery and publication of the *Khuṭba* in 1859 came at a specific point in his career. In the late 1850s he was distancing himself from his longtime primary association with the American Protestant missionaries and working to establish himself as an independent intellectual entrepreneur.[34] Between 1855 and 1861 in particular, he was actively engaged in numerous literary projects. He reissued a book on mathematics and wrote a companion piece on bookkeeping; authored an account of the first Protestant convert and martyr; translated Robinson Crusoe; and penned *Nafīr Sūriyya* (The Clarion of Syria), a series of anonymous patriotic broadsides.[35] He also edited a three-volume history of Mt. Lebanon and began preparing the poetry of the great Arab panegyrist al-Mutanabbī (d. 965) for publication.[36] Al-Bustānī was buried deep in cultural projects and essentially flooding the blossoming print market with his work, most of which were printed at the American Mission Press (est. 1834), the publishing facility operated by the missionaries. His persistent efforts to publish and position himself as the *Muʿallim*, complemented by his working relationship with the American Protestants, helped preserve documents about him in the missionary archives and other Western collections, as well as to reinforce historically his seemingly ubiquitous presence in the *Nahḍa* sociocultural sphere. Through the modalities of sound and print, this article puts into relief how al-Bustānī transmitted his ideas, amplified his reputation, built his cultural empire, and became the master teacher of Beirut society.

I. The art of oration

Public speaking is a time-honoured tradition in the Arabic-speaking world. When orators spoke, they harnessed their linguistic knowledge and elocutionary talents to inform, persuade, and entertain a listening audience. Orations are an indispensable aspect of the political, religious, educational, and literary landscape of Arab-Islamic history.[37] In

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[33] Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution*.

[34] A.L. Tibawi, "The American missionaries in Beirut and Buṭrus al-Bustānī", *Middle Eastern Affairs* 3, 1963, 165–73 and David D. Grafton, *The Contested Origins of the 1865 Bible: Contributions to the Nineteenth-Century* Nahḍa (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 27–30.

[35] Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Kashf al-Ḥijāb fī ʿIlm al-Ḥisāb*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: n.p., 1859); Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Rawḍat al-Tājir fī Mask al-Dafātir* (Beirut: n.p., 1859); Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Qiṣṣat Asʿad al-Shidyāq: Bākūrat Sūriyya* (Beirut: n.p., 1860); Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *al-Tuḥfa al-Bustāniyya fī l-Asfār al-Kurūziyya* (Beirut: n.p., 1861); and Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Nafīr Sūriyya [1860–61]*, ed. Yūsuf Quzmā Khūrī (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr lil-Abḥāth wal-Nashr, 1990). For a superb translation of the broadsides, see Butrus al-Bustani, *The Clarion of Syria: A Patriot's Call Against the Civil War of 1860*, trans. Jens Hanssen and Hicham Safieddine (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019).

[36] Al-Mutanabbī, *Dīwān Abī l-Ṭayyib Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mutanabbī*, ed. Buṭrus al-Bustānī (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Sūriyya, 1860–67) and Ṭannūs al-Shidyāq, *Akhbār al-Aʿyān fī Jabal Lubnān*, ed. Buṭrus al-Bustānī (Beirut: n.p., 1855–59).

[37] Samer M. Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages: Poetry, Public Performance, and the Presentation of the Past* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010); Jonathan P. Berkey, *Popular Preaching and Religious Authority in the Medieval Islamic Near East* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2001); Linda G. Jones, *The Power of Oratory in the Medieval Muslim World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981); and Tahera Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration: Art and Function* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

nineteenth-century Beirut the *jamʿiyyāt* (learned societies) were the cornerstone of social and intellectual life where audiences listened and learned about history, science, culture, literature, and human society from the speaker of the evening.[38] The extant archive preserves three of al-Bustānī's speeches before various iterations of these oratorical societies where he presented his views on the importance of female education (1849), the Arab cultural heritage (1859), and civil society (1869), in addition to giving minor talks on the city of Beirut and the *maqāma*-writer al-Ḥarīrī (d. 1122).[39] He also delivered public lectures, gave twice-weekly speeches at his *Waṭaniyya* (Patriotic) School, and preached, having had at one point seriously desired to enter full-time ministry.[40] A committed Protestant throughout his life, al-Bustānī evangelized outside in the countryside, led services at missionary stations on Mt. Lebanon, taught Sunday School regularly at the Beirut Evangelical Church, which he helped establish in 1848, and sermonized.[41] In 1882, the year before his death, he preached on "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord [Psalm 122:1]" and "Fear not, little flock [Luke 12:32]".[42] In both spiritual and secular settings, al-Bustānī was a popular public speaker of the day.

Muʿallim Buṭrus, however, was not always a master linguist or orator. Applying a *Fuṣḥā* Arabic standard retrospectively to the nineteenth century, the historian Tibawi noted that many of al-Bustānī's early personal correspondences "are disfigured with grammatical mistakes and colloquialisms".[43] Regarding his 1849 public lecture, Tibawi commented that "[t]he style of the lecture shows [al-]Bustānī struggling to achieve clarity and smoothness. In places, the Arabic is clumsy...".[44] A decade later, however, al-Bustānī's rhetorical style was more eloquent when he delivered his *Khuṭba* on 15 February 1859 before a packed house of foreigners and Ottoman Syrians at ʿUmdat al-Khiṭābāt (the Oration Committee).[45] Many scholars have examined the intellectual substance of the *Khuṭba*.[46] Thus here I concentrate on his command of Arabic rhetoric to highlight how he operationalized orality to become an intellectual magnate.

My analysis of the *Khuṭba* commences with a caveat: we, in the twenty-first century, are not hearing what al-Bustānī *said* to his listeners in 1859. We are reading what he *wrote* for public consumption and published ten months later. In the published postscript, he informed his readers that "the gist of this *Khuṭba* was delivered extempore (*irtijāl-an*)".[47] The marketing value of the adverb is noteworthy, as is the connection he

[38] Hill, *Utopia and Civilisation in the Arab Nahda*, 30–47. For orations from two Beirut *jamʿiyyāt*, see Buṭrus al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl al-Jamʿiyya al-Sūriyya* [=*Aʿmāl*] (Beirut: n.p., 1852) and *Majmūʿat al-ʿUlūm* (1868–69), Special Collections, Nami Jafet Memorial Library, American University of Beirut, Lebanon.

[39] Al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*, 27–40, 61–2, and 69–70; Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba fī Ādāb al-ʿArab* [=*Khuṭba*] (Beirut: n.p., 1859); Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Khiṭāb fī l-Hayʾa al-Ijtimāʿiyya wal-Muqābala bayn al-Awāʾid al-ʿArabiyya wal-Ifranjiyya* (Beirut: Maṭbaʿat al-Maʿārif, 1869).

[40] "Al-Marḥūm al-Muʿallim Buṭrus al-Bustānī", 3. For why al-Bustānī did not become an ordained Protestant minister, see Uta Zeuge-Buberl, "Misinterpretations of a missionary policy? The American Syria Mission's conflict with Buṭrus al-Bustānī and Yuḥannā Wurtabāt", *NEST Theological Review* 36/1, 2015, 23–43.

[41] Anthony Edwards, "Revisiting a *Nahḍa* origin story: *Majmaʿ al-Tahdhīb* and the Protestant community in 1840s Beirut", *BSOAS* 82/3, 2019, 448–50; Grafton, *The Contested Origins of the 1865 Arabic Bible*, 26; and Jessup, *Fifty-Three Years in Syria*, 1: 270 and 2: 485.

[42] Jessup, *Fifty-Three Years in Syria*, 2: 485.

[43] Tibawi, "The American missionaries in Beirut and Buṭrus al-Bustānī", 159 n. 78.

[44] Tibawi, "The American missionaries in Beirut and Buṭrus al-Bustānī", 165 n. 97.

[45] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 3 and 40.

[46] Jeffrey Sacks, *Iterations of Loss: Mutilation and Aesthetic Form, al-Shidyaq to Darwish* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 79–91; Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, 19–45; and Zachs, *The Making of a Syrian Identity*, 145–8.

[47] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 40.

made to the craft of speechmaking. In their discussions on oratory, the polymaths al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 868) and Ibn Quṭayba (d. 889) applauded the ability of Arabs to speak extemporaneously with little to no preparation.[48] Al-Bustānī too understood "extempore" to compass oratory. He explained in his dictionary that the verb *irtajala* (to extemporize) "is often used to string poetry and create orations (*inshāʾ al-khuṭab*), as Arabs did in days of old".[49] By boastfully printing "extempore" (*irtijāl-an*) in the postscript, he impressed upon his readers that he could engage his listeners directly by "controlling the directions of his words, which he based to a large extent on the reactions of his audience", like orators did in the early Islamic period.[50] Whether he did or did not speak spontaneously, he delicately communicated to his reading audience that he was capable of such a task. The local newspaper underscored the aural dimensions of his oration and gave a more credible account of his delivery, reporting that he "composed it and delivered it aloud".[51] Regarding the degree of control al-Bustānī had on the final published text, in all probability he exercised complete control on copyediting and proofing, because he self-financed its publication at the American Mission Press.[52]

Al-Bustānī cued his speech as a language performance reminiscent of early Arabic orations, when people expected spontaneous eloquence from their leaders.[53] To assure his listeners of the cultural legitimacy of his speech and present himself as an heir to the Arabic oratorical tradition, he recounted how his predecessors "took pride in ... composing orations (*taʾlīf al-khuṭab*)" and "could create extempore (*irtijāl-an*) what others could not".[54] Al-Bustānī was aware that public speaking is a performance of the verbal arts where an orator assumes "responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative competence ... [that] rests on the knowledge and ability to speak in socially appropriate ways".[55] He thus feigned humility and offered a disclaimer at the outset, reminding listeners that it was they who had sought an exhibition of language from him: "Thus, by the petition and request of this [Oration] Committee, I stand before you gentlemen today, and say (*aqūl*)".[56] His use of the first-person singular instead of the authoritative first-person plural "we say" (*naqūl*), which he used chiefly in the discourse, indicates insincere self-effacement on the part of the orator-teacher. Later in the *Khuṭba*, he used the first-person singular once more to express compliance with his audience's desires: "Had I been tasked (*law kulliftu*) to stand before you...".[57] As the subject of a passive verb, he reminded his listeners that they had asked him to orate and thus, they carried the responsibility to evaluate his linguistic performance that evening.

Parallelism is a hallmark of Arabic oration and a ubiquitous feature of eloquent Arabic prose. In her groundbreaking study, Qutbuddin explicated how parallel constructions are boosted internally by *sajʿ* (rhymed prose), i.e. assonance (vocalic rhyme) and consonance (consonantal rhyme).[58] Although separated for analytical ease, these two types of rhymes regularly overlap. Speeches traditionally opened with stylistic embellishments, as a way to announce the oratorical capabilities of the speaker and to establish the performative nature of the event. Al-Bustānī adhered to this convention, starting his *Khuṭba* with the

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[48] Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 207–8.
[49] Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ*, vol. 1 (Beirut: n.p., 1867), 757.
[50] Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 207.
[51] *ḤA* 2/100, 1 Dec. 1859.
[52] Auji, *Printing Arab Modernity*, 138.
[53] Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 9–11 and 31–2.
[54] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 4–5.
[55] Richard Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 1977), 11.
[56] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 3–4.
[57] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 30.
[58] Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 99.

line: "The topic is the Culture of the Arabs (*ādāb al-ʿarab*), or if you would like, call [it] the sciences of the Arabs (*ʿulūm al-ʿarab*), the arts of the Arabs (*funūn al-ʿarab*), or the knowledge of the Arabs (*maʿārif al-ʿarab*)".[59] While establishing comprehensive synonymity, he more crucially produced rhythm through parallel structures. The first word of each label has a long medial vowel: the first and fourth have /ā/; the second and third have /ū/. The word "Arabs" (*al-ʿarab*) anchors each synonym, acoustically creating punctuation. Al-Bustānī stretched the assonance into the next sentence: "However, before starting to speak about this topic, which will be delightful and beneficial (*ladhīd-an wa-mufīd-an*) to everyone who desires to acquire (*al-wuqūf*) fully the truth of the matter (*al-umūr*), we must mention ...".[60] The adjectives and nouns are morphologically equivalent on the patterns *faʿīl* and *fuʿūl*, respectively. The acoustics of these introductory lines formed the introduction to al-Bustānī as a master orator.

A prominent feature of parallelism is the creation of synonymous pairs.[61] Regarding the Abbasid translation movement,[62] al-Bustānī related that the caliph al-Manṣūr (d. 775) "stirred people to read them [the translations] and urged them to teach them (*ḥarraḍa l-nās ʿalā qirāʾat-hā wa-raghghaba-hum fī taʿlīm-hā*)".[63] The second phrase flawlessly mirrors the syntax of the first: verb + direct object + preposition + noun + indirect object pronoun. Furthermore, the verbs "stirred" (*ḥarraḍa*) and "urged" (*raghghaba*) are semantically and morphosyntactically identical, i.e. they convey the same meaning and are both on the pattern *faʿʿala*. Lastly, the prepositional phrases "to read them" (*-hā*) and "to teach them" (*-hā*) produce sentence-final assonance. In this example *Muʿallim* Buṭrus created a synonymous pair as per the rules of Arabic oration which, in conjunction with vocalic and consonantal rhyme, underscored his point and foregrounded him as a gifted rhetorician.

Al-Bustānī exploited the breadth of parallelism, which included the creation of antithetical pairs. Antithesis is when "adjacent phrases contained pairs of words with opposite meanings".[64] On the removal of Arabic knowledge to medieval Europe, he remarked: "Its light began steadily decreasing in the East and increasing in the West (*akhadha nūr-hā yatanāqaṣ fī l-sharq wa-yatazāyad fī l-gharb*)".[65] "And" (*wa-*) is the syntactic fulcrum, while "decreasing" (*yatanāqaṣ*) and "increasing" (*yatazāyad*) resonate in sound yet clash in meaning. The cardinal directions grounded the contrasting meanings. Antithetical pairs also reinforce semantics. Speaking on the status of Arabic in the nineteenth century, he noted: "It is truly poor, not rich (*faqīra lā ghaniyya*), and its people are poor, not rich (*fuqarāʾ-**u** wa-lā aghniyāʾ-**u***)".[66] Using antonyms to reiterate the deplorable current condition of Arabic and its users, al-Bustānī's point is confirmed acoustically with the second antithetical pair ending in *-āʾ*, which itself is bolstered by the printed *ḍamma* /u/ to mark the nominative case. Antithesis helped his audience better understand his message and enabled the *Muʿallim* to exhibit his aptitude in Arabic stylistics.

Al-Bustānī marshalled the full arsenal of rhetorical devices, including the theme of *ubi sunt* (Where are...[they]).[67] Displaying his mastery of Arabic rhythm and rhyme, he asked: "So where were the Arabs, and where are they now? ..."

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[59] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 2.

[60] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 2.

[61] Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 96.

[62] Scholars in Baghdad translated and preserved numerous classical Greek texts from the mid-eighth to the late tenth centuries. Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early ʿAbbāsid Society (2nd–4th/8th–10th Centuries)* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

[63] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 10.

[64] Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 97.

[65] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 26.

[66] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 20.

[67] Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 111–2.

ayna l-shuʿarāʾ ayna l-aṭibbāʾ ayna l-khuṭabāʾ ayna l-madāris ayna l-makātib ayna l-falāsifa
ayna l-muhandisūn ayna l-muʾarrikhūn ayna l-falakiyyūn ayna kutub hādhihi l-funūn ayna
l-ʿulamāʾ al-muḥaqqiqūn ayna l-ʿudabāʾ al-mudaqqiqūn.

Where are the versifiers, doctors, and orators? Where are the schools, assemblies, and philosophers? Where are the geometricians, historians, and astronomers? Where are the books of these disciplines, and the demanding scientists and exacting humanists?[68]

Acoustic harmony layers this rhetorical inquiry meant to cajole audience participation. The absence of punctuation, except for a final period, does not impede comprehension, for assonance and consonance internally structure the printed text. The sounds -*āʾ*, -*ā*-, and -*ūn* echo three times, each in succession, to form three distinct groupings. Next the -*ūn* in "the books of these disciplines" (*l-funūn*) echoes to link the writings to the individuals mentioned in the previous line. To complete the *ubi sunt*, al-Bustānī joined the nouns and adjectives to one another with near perfect alliteration and internal vocalic balance: *u-a-āʾ* for the nouns and *u-a-i-ūn* for the adjectives. His philological skill is unquestionable, as a single consonant differentiates the adjectives "demanding" (*muḥaqqiqūn*) and "exacting" (*mudaqqiqūn*). Regarding the word *ayna* (where), every lost item cited deserves its own interrogative. Stylistically, this refrain of relentless "wheres" rings throughout to enforce the loss and to enhance the aural experience for the audience. Knowing that in the Arab oratorical tradition rhetorical questions helped make "the oration a highly interactive speech performance",[69] al-Bustānī deployed *ubi sunt* to create a euphonious moment in his *Khuṭba* so as to exhibit his proficiency at the art of oration.

Arabic oratory developed alongside *Nahḍa* discourses about reviving Arabic language, literature, and culture.[70] In the nineteenth century, Arab scholars and intellectuals debated how the Arabic literary language that they inherited could best serve new habits, worldviews, and socioeconomic changes in civil society. At oratorical societies and through the burgeoning press, they collectively redefined linguistic standards and contoured the language to suit their social and political wants and technological needs.[71] They did not, though, advance a singular vision, as documented in public polemics on the language.[72] Conservative reformers were concerned with proper usage and stressed the importance of language purity, while the liberal constituency argued that Arabic must be simplified in order to become a useful means of communication.[73] Buṭrus al-Bustānī approached Arabic grammar and style in a traditional manner, even though he exhibited innovative practices in lexicography and editing.[74] In this vein, the rhetorical features of his *Khuṭba*, such as *sajʿ* (rhymed prose) and synonymous pairs, can be seen as

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[68] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 26–7.

[69] Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 111.

[70] For an enlightening study of oratory in the late nineteenth century through a comparative lens, consult Abdulrazzak Patel, "*Nahḍah* oratory: Western rhetoric in al-Shartūnī's manual on the art of the oratory", *Middle Eastern Literatures* 12/3, 2009, 233–69.

[71] Anthony Edwards, "Serializing protestantism: The missionary *Miscellany* and the Arabic press in 1850s Beirut", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 49/1, 2022, 94–6 and Anthony Edwards, "Performing Arabic at the learned societies of Beirut, 1846–1869" (PhD diss., The University of Texas at Austin, 2015).

[72] Adrian Gully, "Arabic issues and controversies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 42/1, 1997, 75–120 and Abdulrazzak Patel, "Language reform and controversy in the *Nahḍa*: al-Shartūnī's position as a grammarian in *Sahm*", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 55/2, 2010, 509–38.

[73] Patel, "Language reform and controversy in the *Nahḍa*".

[74] Rana Issa, "The Arabic language and Syro-Lebanese national identity: searching in Buṭrus al-Bustānī's *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ*", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 62/2, 2017, 470–1; Fruma Zachs and Yehudit Dror, "Al-Bustānī's approach to the Arabic language: from theory to practice", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series 3, 2019, 1–21; and Fruma Zachs

indicative of the genre of oratory, as well as his conservative adherence to elegant Arabic prose in general.

In 1859 al-Bustānī tapped into centuries of Arabic rhetorical style to begin stylizing himself as a public pedagogue. Akin to the Palestinian artist *Muʿallim* Nicola Saig, whose work "took place *within* well-established artistic, literary and intellectual practices of synthesizing elements of native modernity",[75] al-Bustānī too utilized the devices of eloquent Arabic prose, such as synonymous and antithetical pairings, amplified by vocalic and consonantal rhyme, to contour his vision for the unfolding *Nahḍa*. As the heir to the Arabic oratorical tradition, he used the width, depth, and breadth of syntax and morphology to communicate his assessment of the condition of Arab society and culture. Following in the artistic footsteps of religious and political leaders from the past, as well as educators and scholars, *Muʿallim* Buṭrus deployed the art of Arabic oration to garner support and present himself as a public leader for Beirut.

II. Skilful *sariqa*

Al-Bustānī excelled at repackaging what his colleagues had already said. Zachs established that his 1859 *Khuṭba* "contained several clear echoes" of nationalist conceptualizations of Syria that were first championed by the missionary Eli Smith (1801–56) in an 1852 address before *al-Jamʿiyya al-Sūriyya li-Ktisāb al-ʿUlūm wal-Funūn* (the Syrian Society of Arts and Sciences, est. 1847; hereafter the Syrian Society).[76] In this section I concentrate on portions of al-Bustānī's oration that were verbatim to other Syrian Society speeches to explain how he practised the craft of *sariqa* to build his *Muʿallim* brand and engaged in the collective practices of *Nahḍa* writers to produce and proliferate knowledge.

Traditional Arabic literary theory interprets *sariqa* as "plagiarism" or "literary theft" and identifies three primary types: *naskh* (copy/paste), *salkh* (part copy/paste, part paraphrase), and *maskh* (paraphrase).[77] Al-Bustānī accepted this normative understanding, defining *sariqa* as "to take something secretly and craftily" (*fī khafāʾ-in wa-ḥīlat-in*), which occurred in the literary realm when "a poet takes a piece of poetry from others, claiming it as his own" (*nāsib-an iyyāh ilā nafsih*).[78] Critics of this formalistic rubric, however, describe *sariqa* as "legitimate borrowing" and argue that the *sariqa* practice cultivated more sophisticated imagery and generated "a rich intertextual space, both ancient and modern".[79] Because the *Muʿallim* and his Beirut scholarly community were aware of *sariqa*,[80] the terms associated with it inform the following discussion on how he appropriated and stylistically enhanced existing material.

Before detecting instances of intertextuality in al-Bustānī's *Khuṭba*, it is useful to recognize that much of his literary output was based on emulating his predecessors and developing their writings, a standard practice in knowledge production in the

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and Yehudit Dror, "The Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ dictionary: the transition from Classical to Modern Arabic lexicography", *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 20, 2020, 15–32.

[75] Sheehi, "Before painting", 367.

[76] Zachs, *The Making of a Syrian Identity*, 145–8. Quote on page 145.

[77] Gustave E. von Grunebaum, "The concept of plagiarism in Arabic theory", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 3/4, 1944, 234–53 and Patel, "Reviving the past", 103.

[78] Al-Bustānī, *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ*, 1: 951.

[79] Wolfhart Heinrichs, "An evaluation of 'Sariqa'", *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 5/6, 1987–88, 357–68; Muhsin J. al-Musawi, "Canons, thefts, and palimpsests in the Arabic literary tradition", *Journal of Arabic Literature* 51, 2020, 165–88; and Erez Naaman, "*Sariqa* in practice: the case of Al-Ṣāḥib Ibn ʿAbbād", *Middle Eastern Literatures* 14/3, 2011, 271–85. Quote from al-Musawi, 168.

[80] Patel, "Reviving the past", 103–4.

Arabic-speaking world.[81] The works of Jirmānūs Farḥāt (1670–1732), the celebrated philologist and Maronite Archbishop of Aleppo, inspired several of his grammatical and lexicographical projects.[82] Al-Bustānī modelled his *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ* (Encompassing the All-Encompassing) and *Miṣbāḥ al-Ṭālib fī Bathth al-Maṭālib* (Lanterns Burning for Students Discerning) on Farḥāt's dictionary and grammar, respectively.[83] In his dictionary, al-Bustānī quoted extensively from al-Fīrūzābādī's (1329–1415) *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* (The All-Encompassing Dictionary),[84] and in naming his work *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ* (Encompassing the All-Encompassing [Dictionary]), he asserted that his lexicon – and by extension, he – was superior to its fourteenth-century forerunner. *Muʿallim* Buṭrus used materials and models from the past to become a prolific purveyor of Arab culture.

Al-Bustānī was part of a dynamic scholarly community in Beirut who read and listened to one another as they developed and debated ideas about Arab culture and society. Under the purview of the American Protestant missionaries, the Greek Catholic philologist Nāṣīf al-Yāzijī (1800–71) collaborated with al-Bustānī on many projects in the 1840s and 1850s. They worked as correctors, translators, and authors at the American Mission Press, produced a Protestant translation of the Bible, and engaged in lively discussions at *Majmaʿ al-Tahdhīb* (the Refinement Committee, est. 1846) and the Syrian Society.[85] About a decade before the *Khuṭba*, al-Yāzijī gave a speech titled *Fī ʿUlūm al-ʿArab* (On the Sciences of the Arabs) at the latter confraternity in which he surveyed the fields of Arab knowledge from the pre-Islamic era through the early centuries of Islam.[86] Al-Bustānī's reliance on this speech is evident in a subheading: "Part one: On the state of the sciences (*ḥālat al-ʿulūm*) among the Arabs before Islam".[87] His attempt to conceal the source text by amending the title was futile. Al-Bustānī had established synonymity between *ādāb* (culture), *ʿulūm* (sciences), *funūn* (arts), and *maʿārif* (knowledge) in the first line of the *Khuṭba* and could have used any of these terms in the subheading.[88] By privileging the word *ʿulūm*, he unknowingly revealed al-Yāzijī to be his source and thereby enabled me to identify the initial author of the next paragraph:

Al-Yāzijī

*lā yakhfā anna l-ʿarab **kānū qawm-an ummiyīn** lā yaʿrifūn al-qirāʾa wa-lā l-kitāba illā **qalīl**-un **min-hum**. wa-lam takun ʿind-hum illā qalīn-an fī l-nujūm wal-ṭibb ʿamal-an bil-istiqrāʾ-i wal-tajriba. gayra anna-hum **kānū fī aʿlā ṭabaqat**-in **min nabāhat al-fikr wa-faṣāḥat al-lisān wa-surʿat al-khāṭir ḥattā kānū** yunaẓẓimūn **al-shiʿr** irtijāl-an fa-**yāʾtūn** fī-hi **bi-mā lā yuqaddar** ʿalayhi ghayr-hum baʿd al-tarwiya wal-istiʿdād.*

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[81] Franz Rosenthal, "'Of making many books there is no end': the Classical Muslim view", in George N. Atiyeh (ed.), *The Book in the Islamic World: The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), 44–55.

[82] Kristen Brustad, "Jirmānūs (Jibrīl) Farḥāt", in Joseph E. Lowry and Devin J. Stewart (eds), *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography, 1350–1850* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009), 247.

[83] Issa, "The Arabic language and Syro-Lebanese national identity", 470–1 and Tibawi, "The American missionaries in Beirut and Buṭrus al-Bustānī", 172 n. 124. For more on al-Bustānī's engagement with classical lexicography, see Zachs and Dror, "The Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ dictionary".

[84] Issa, "The Arabic language and Syro-Lebanese national identity", 473.

[85] Hala Auji, *Printing Arab Modernity*, 29–34; Edwards, "Revisiting a *Nahḍa* origin story", 437–8; and Grafton, *The Contested Origins of the 1865 Bible*.

[86] Al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*, 41–3.

[87] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 4.

[88] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 2. For the semantic evolution of these terms, see Adam Mestyan, "Arabic lexicography and European aesthetics: the origin of *Fann*", *Muqarnas* 28, 2011, 69–100 and Stephan Guth, "Politeness, Höflichkeit, ʾadab: a comparative conceptual-cultural perspective", in Lutz Edzard and Stephan Guth (eds), *Verbal Festivity in Arabic and other Semitic Languages* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 9–30.

It is well known that **the Arabs were an illiterate people who could neither read nor write, except for a few of them**. They only had some [knowledge] of astronomy and medicine achieved through study and experience. **Yet they were among the top tier in intelligence, eloquence, and intuition, such that they could** string together poetry **extempore, creating what others could not do even after thought and consideration.**[89]

Al-Bustānī

inna **l-ʿarab** *qabl ẓuhūr al-islām ay fī ayyām al-jāhiliyya* **kānū qawm-an ummiyīn lā yaʿrifūn al-qirāʾa wa-lā l-kitāba illā** *l-***qalīl min-hum***. al-ʿulūm allātī kānū yatafākharūn bi-hā fa-hiya ʿilm lisān-him wa-aḥkām lughat-him wa-naẓam al-ashʿār wa-taʾlīf al-khuṭab. wa-kān la-hum maʿa hādhā maʿrifa bi-awqāt maṭāliʿ al-nujūm wa-maghārib-hā wa-ʿilm-un bi-anwāʾ-i l-kawākib wa-amṭār-hā ʿalā ḥasab mā adrakūh-u bi-farṭ al-ʿināya wa-ṭūl al-tajriba li-ḥtiyāj-him ilā maʿrifat dhālika fī asbāb al-maʿīsha lā ʿalā ṭarīq taʿallum al-ḥaqāʾiq. wa-maʿa anna llāh lam yamnaḥ-hum shayʾ-an min ʿilm al-falsafa wa-lā hayyaʾa ṭibāʾiʿ-hum lil-ʿināya bi-hi* **kānū fī aʿlā ṭabaqa min nabāhat al-fikr wa-faṣāḥat al-lisān wa-surʿat al-khāṭir ḥattā** *anna-hum* **kānū yāʾtūn irtijāl-an bi-mā lā yuqaddar** *ʿalayhi ghayr-hum baʿd* **al-tarwiya wal-istiʿdād.**

Before the advent of Islam, i.e. in the Time of Ignorance, **the Arabs were an illiterate people among whom only few could read and write**. The fields in which they took pride were the lexicon and grammar of their language, versification, and composing orations. Along with this, they knew when the stars ascend and descend and discerned where the planets rise and set, which they came to know through extreme care and prolonged exposure, needing to know this in order to live – not to acquire facts. Although God granted them nothing from philosophy nor endowed them with a natural disposition for it, **they were among the top tier in intelligence, eloquence, and intuition, such that they could create extempore what others could not do even after thought and consideration.**[90]

Al-Bustānī inserted al-Yāzijī's words straight into the *Khuṭba*, copying/pasting (*naskh*) the last sentence word-for-word. While he lightly altered the first sentence, the structure of the paragraph faithfully mirrors the opening lines of his contemporary. He stylistically modified al-Yāzijī's comment on "some [knowledge] of astronomy …", writing: "they knew when the stars ascend and descend (**maṭāli**ʿ *al-nujūm wa-***maghārib**-*hā*) and discerned where the planets rise and set (**anwā**ʾ-*i l-kawākib wa-***amṭār**-*hā*)". Here *Muʿallim* Buṭrus protracted the paraphrased sentence (*maskh*) through syntactic and semantic parallelism and auditory harmony, sequencing the patterns of *mafāʿil* and *afʿāl*, respectively.

Al-Bustānī also drew material from al-Yāzijī's conclusion, providing an example of *salkh* (part copy/paste, part paraphrase). The decline of state patronage for knowledge and intellectual inertness are the topic.

Al-Yāzijī

*wa-***mā zāla** *dhālika* **kadhālika ḥattā saqaṭat raghbat al-mulūk fī** *l-***ʿilm fa-nqataʿat asbāb al-ṭalab wa-taʿaṭṭala l-saʿy fī taḥṣīl-hi wa-***datharat* **muṣannafāt-hu wa-afnā l-dahr ahl-hu ḥattā fuqida kathīr**-*un min* hādhihi *l-***ʿulūm fa-lam** *yuʿraf* **la-hā ʿayn-un wa-lā athar wa-***jarrat baqiyat-hā ʿalā āthār-hi.*

[89] Al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*, 41.
[90] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 4–5.

It **remained like this until the appetite of kings for knowledge declined. As a result, [the means] to pursue knowledge became hopeless, efforts to learn became hindered, scholarly works** fell into disuse, **and time foiled the scholars until many of** these sciences **were lost. Absolutely no trace of the sciences was** seen, **and** what remained of them ran on fumes.[91]

Al-Bustānī

*wa-mā zāla*t *al-ʿarab* **kadhālika ḥattā saqaṭat raghbat al-mulūk** *wal-akābir* **fī l-ʿilm fa-nqataʿat asbāb al-ṭalab wa-taʿaṭṭala l-saʿy fī taḥṣīl-hi wa-**darusat **muṣannafāt-hu ḥattā fuqida kathīr min**-hā **fa-lam** yabqa **la-hā ʿayn-un wa-lā athar wa-**kasudat biḍāʿat al-ʿilm **wa-afnā l-dahr ahl-hu**.

The Arabs **remained like this until the appetite of kings** and princes **for knowledge declined. As a result, [the means] to pursue knowledge became hopeless, efforts to learn became hindered**, and **scholarly works** were obliterated **until many of** them **were lost. Absolutely no trace of the sciences was** left. The value of knowledge stagnated, **and time foiled the scholars**.[92]

Al-Yāzijī authored the bulk of this paragraph, which appears 25 pages into al-Bustānī's *Khuṭba*. The *Muʿallim*, though, exerted editing control and tweaked his predecessor's words and structure in order to magnify his own reputation as an Arabic master. By adding "and princes" to al-Yāzijī's "kings", al-Bustānī created conceptual totality and syntactic parallelism. To flaunt his philological knowledge – a reputable pastime among Arabic aficionados – he also replaced the mundane verb "*datharat*" (fell into disuse) with the rare verb "*darusat*" (were obliterated). Furthermore, he deliberately let the reader think that he wrote these words. In the preceding paragraph, he quoted Avicenna (d. 1037), and, after a long first-person singular narration, al-Bustānī wrote: "... let's return to what we were just discussing on the history of the Culture of the Arabs; so, we say (*naqūl*)".[93] By invoking the first-person plural, he spoke with an authoritative voice from the lectern and sought to claim al-Yāzijī's words as his own to conceal the fact that the *Muʿallim* stood on the shoulders of a living literary legend.

   Al-Bustānī found inspiration also in the words of the missionary physician and dedicated educationalist Cornelius Van Dyck (1818–95), who was a fixture of the Beirut cultural landscape for over half a century. The two men roomed together in the early 1840s[94] and forged an enduring friendship as cultural collaborators and Protestant brothers in Christ. They co-operated on numerous enterprises such as the missionary school at ʿAbeih and as core members of three learned societies.[95] Al-Bustānī's literary reusages from Van Dyck's lecture at the Syrian Society titled *Fī Ladhdhāt al-ʿIlm wa-Fawāʾidih* (On the Pleasures and Benefits of Knowledge) were more subtle than his borrowings from al-Yāzijī's speech. Regarding the unjustified praise of people who possess a modicum of knowledge, Van Dyck wrote: "When someone learns to read and write, he thinks that he has concluded his education (*qad khatama ʿilmah*), ...[and] has become the

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[91] Al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*, 43.
[92] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 25.
[93] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 25.
[94] Zaydān, *Tarājim Mashāhīr al-Sharq fī l-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ ʿAshar*, 2: 41.
[95] The three societies were *Majmaʿ al-Tahdhīb* (the Refinement Committee), the Syrian Society, and the Oration Committee. Grafton pointed out that it remains unknown how al-Bustānī felt after Van Dyck terminated him from the Bible translation project. "Circular/*Iʿlān* [from the Oration Committee] (1859)", United States National Archives, Record Group 59, T367, roll 3; Grafton, *The Contested Origins of the 1865 Bible*, 25–8; and Edwards, "Revisiting a *Nahḍa* origin story", 438–42 and 448.

Philosopher of the Age (*faylasūf al-zamān*) and the Sage of All-Time".[96] Al-Bustānī wrote in the *Khuṭba*: "It is said that whoever learns to read the Psalms and the Qurʾān has concluded his education (*qad khatama ʿilmah*), ...and become the Great Scholar of his Age (*ʿallāmat zamānih*)".[97] The phrasing and imagery are too similar to be coincidental, indicating that Van Dyck's speech served as a template. In a strict interpretation of *sariqa*, this literary theft is *maskh*: al-Bustānī paraphrased the sentence to deliberately hide his source text. In descriptive terms, however, he upgraded the borrowed sentence because he nuanced and decluttered it. Al-Bustānī's stereotypical learner is ecumenically relatable as a reader of both Christian and Muslim texts and, in a move uncharacteristic of the *Muʿallim*, he reduced Van Dyck's parallelism of "the Philosopher ... and the Sage ..." to simply "the Great Scholar ...". By developing this paraphrased sentence, al-Bustānī expanded the potential audience and the emotive force of the original, thereby subtly exhibiting his superior oratorical abilities.

Van Dyck and al-Bustānī both concluded their lectures with poetry, for in the Arabic tradition of oration citing verses "evoked strong associations, and thus encouraged an affirmative [audience] response".[98] Van Dyck quoted the eminent orator and fourth political leader of Islam, Imām ʿAlī (d. 661), on the indispensability of scholars to humanity:

> Only scholars possess virtue, for they are
>> Guides for all who seek the Righteous Path.
> A person's worth is found in what he can do well.
>> Fools are the adversaries of scholars.
> So, engage with knowledge and wish not for it a substitute.
>> People are dead, while scholars are living.[99]

Curiously, al-Bustānī cited the same verses just before his rousing coda in 1859, although he omitted the middle line.[100] By extracting it, he concentrated solely on the positive value of knowledge for civil society and on the efforts of its tireless advocates, i.e. the *Muʿallim* and his counterparts. Both Van Dyck and al-Bustānī drew from the same literary repertoire to harness the authoritative connotations associated with ʿAlī's eloquence for themselves. However, al-Bustānī eclipsed both the missionary-educationalist and the orator-Imam by sharpening the verses and eliminating "the adversaries of scholars" from existence. Operationalizing the Arabic literary past and the words of longtime colleagues, the *Muʿallim* intertextually engaged with peer producers of knowledge and boosted what his brand name represented.

Since the three men were connected through the Protestant missionary effort and the Beirut cultural scene, it is probable that al-Yāzijī and Van Dyck read al-Bustānī's oration and noticed their words littered among his. It is highly plausibly that Van Dyck, a founder of the Oration Committee and member of its executive committee, actually heard al-Bustānī read his *Khuṭba* before the oratorical society.[101] Given the collaborative literary environment, al-Yāzijī and Van Dyck conceivably did not find his actions transgressive but instead deemed them to be permissible and helpful to advancing Arab culture and society. Their relationships with the *Muʿallim* did not deteriorate after 1859, as revealed by the poetic endorsements they wrote for his grammar in 1862.[102] Van Dyck remained close

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[96] Al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*, 3.
[97] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 31.
[98] Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 129.
[99] The first hemistich reads *mā l-faḍl illā li-ahl al-ʿilm inna-hum*. Al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*, 10.
[100] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 39.
[101] "Circular/Iʿlān [from the Oration Committee] (1859)".
[102] Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Miftāḥ al-Miṣbāḥ fī Uṣūl al-Ṣarf wal-Naḥw lil-Mubtadiʾīn* (Beirut: n.p., 1862), 143–4.

friends with al-Bustānī, even as the local intellectual detached himself from the missionary community to wholeheartedly pursue literary ventures. His eulogy of the Ottoman Syrian literary entrepreneur in 1883 speaks to their fraternal bond that lasted over 40 years:

> I stand in your midst weeping and mourning my brother and love who was fiercely snatched away from us; nay, he was my *muʿallim*, my mentor (*ustādhī*), and my friend. How many evenings of studying, reading, writing, and pleasant companionship we enjoyed together … .[103]

Similarly, al-Bustānī's relationship with al-Yāzijī did not cease after the *Khuṭba*. Sharing an unending love for the Arabic language, al-Yāzijī proofread drafts of the *Muʿallim*'s dictionary *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ* (1867–70) and taught morphology, syntax, and rhetoric at his *Waṭaniyya* School (est. 1863).[104] Al-Yāzijī also composed the chronographic epitaph for al-Bustānī's daughter Sarah (d. 1866).[105] United by a passion for Arabic and the participatory nature of learning, these men remained connected with one another personally and professionally

Al-Bustānī stayed abreast of research produced by his peers and to establish himself as a wellspring of insight for society, he occasionally finessed their words and thoughts into more eloquent articulate forms. While many of his writings are original, a measurable amount was pilfered or expanded. Whether judged to be literary thefts or appreciated as legitimate borrowings, the *Muʿallim* stylistically developed the output of his peers to support his brand-building project and contribute to the collective project of advancing knowledge in Beirut.

III. A marketing genius

After delivering his assessment of Arab culture in February 1859, al-Bustānī published it with the sobriquet of *Muʿallim* emblazoned on the cover. Released in December 1859 his printed *Khuṭba* is the first standalone publication on a contemporary social issue written by a single Arab author during the Beirut *Nahḍa*.[106] Tracts issued by the American Mission Press, where he had been a translator and had his secular *Khuṭba* printed, are obvious forerunners, although these religious publications were often translated.[107] An original tract or two pedagogical treatises on childrearing issued by the same press might have inspired al-Bustānī to print his oration.[108] Previous publications by Ottoman Syrians in town often contained the views of many individuals, such as *Aʿmāl al-Jamʿiyya al-Sūriyya* (*Transactions of the Syrian Society*), or were poetry collections, lengthy travelogues, or textbooks.[109] Al-Bustānī's publication was distinct: it was a concise 40-page chapbook that contained his critique of past and present Arab scientific and humanist knowledge. A modern version of the handwritten scholarly *risāla* (treatise), his initiative to print his

[103] Zaydān, *Tarājim Mashāhīr al-Sharq fī l-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ ʿAshar*, 2: 30.

[104] *ḤA* 7/322, 16 June 1864 and Shākir al-Khūrī, *Majmaʿ al-Masarrāt* (Beirut: Maṭbaʿat al-Ijtihād, 1908), 115–6.

[105] Nāṣīf al-Yāzijī, *Thālith al-Qamarayn* (Beirut: n.p., 1883), 139.

[106] *ḤA* 2/100, 1 Dec. 1859.

[107] *Qiṣṣat Ālām Sayyid-nā Yasūʿ al-Masīḥ* (Beirut: n.p., 1841) and *Mawʿiẓa fī Ghaḍab Allāh ʿalā l-Khuṭāh* (Beirut: n.p., 1849). For a list of books from the American Mission Press, see Auji, *Printing Arab Modernity*, 136–8.

[108] *Khiṭāb Mufīd fī l-Kanīsa wal-Taqlīd* (Beirut: n.p., 1849); *Risāla fī Tarbīyat al-Awlād* (Beirut: n.p., 1850); and *Risāla fī Wājibāt al-Awlād* (Beirut: n.p., 1851).

[109] Al-Yāzijī, *Nubdha min Dīwān al-Shaykh Nāṣīf al-Yāzijī*; Salīm Bustrus, *al-Nuzha al-Shahīya fī l-Riḥla al-Salīmiyya* (Beirut: n.p., 1856); Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Miṣbāḥ al-Ṭālib fī Baḥth al-Maṭālib* (Beirut: n.p., 1854); and al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*.

oration was unprecedented and created a model for others to follow.[110] For example, his Oration Committee colleague Khalīl al-Khūrī (1836–1907) published *Kharābāt Sūriyya* (Ruins of Syria) in March 1860, just months after al-Bustānī released his *Khuṭba*.[111] *Muʿallim* Buṭrus pre-empted his associate to foreground his name and ideas before the readership in town.

Al-Bustānī published his secular tract under the title: "A *Khuṭba* on the culture of the Arabs". He strategically chose the word *khuṭba* in lieu of *khiṭāb* (address), explaining elsewhere that "from the pulpit" an individual "reads the *khuṭba* (sermon) to those in attendance, preaches theology for the sake of piety, and exhorts", whereas a *khiṭāb* is "speech directed toward others so as to help them understand".[112] By putting the word *khuṭba* on the cover, he exploited its religious and institutional connotations, even though within the discourse he referred to it as a *khiṭāb*.[113] The word *khuṭba* lent credibility to his oration and imbued him with a heightened sense of dignity and legitimacy. As noted above, al-Khūrī mimicked the *Muʿallim*'s promotional strategy. In his newspaper he considered his address "Ruins of Syria" a *khuṭba* but called it a *khiṭāb* on the publication cover.[114] In the late 1850s both men were launching their public careers in the cultural arena, and a *khuṭba* was just the marketing device that al-Bustānī needed to distinguish himself.

In the *Khuṭba* al-Bustānī liberally printed the Arabic short vowels of *ḍamma* /u/, *fatḥa* /a/, and *kasra* /i/ to facilitate elocution and ensure that the customer-reader was able to render the text aloud properly. Typically, these auxiliary orthographic signs are transcribed to avert misunderstandings and resolve ambiguities. Yet in the *Muʿallim*'s printed discourse, they served a pedagogical function. For example, the apocopated final letter of defective jussive verbs is printed: "Knowledge and culture no longer had marketability (*lam yabqa lil-ʿulūm wal-ādāb sūq-un*)".[115] The final consonant-turned-short vowel for defective nouns also materialized: "… and not [a single] advocate (… *wa-lā muḥāmin*)".[116] For formal grammatical features, such as feminine human plurals, he included the /a/, the *shadda* (geminating grapheme), and the *sukūn* (zero-vowel sign) to assist the reader: "… the nuns who, because of their order, were satisfied with what would benefit themselves (… *al-rāhibāt allawātī min shaʾn ṭarīqat-**hunna** an yaqtaṣir**na** ʿalā mā bi-hi ifādat anfus-**hunna***)".[117] Lastly, al-Bustānī systematically added /u/ and /i/ on "from him" (*min-h**u***) and "in him" (*fī-h**i***) to combat the phonetic transgressions "from he" (*min-hī*) and "in he" (*fī-hū*) on which he schooled his audience during the *Khuṭba* itself.[118] The constant appearance of the short vowels in the printed *Khuṭba* implies a didactic role for the printed text and graphemically affirmed the *Muʿallim* as an expert language teacher.

Al-Bustānī was already preoccupied with self-promotion years before delivering the *Khuṭba*. His *Khiṭāb fī Taʿlīm al-Nisāʾ* (An Address on Female Education) appeared in

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[110] Ibrāhīm al-Yāzijī, "Mulakhkhaṣ fī l-Ṭibb al-Qadīm" (Beirut: n.p., [1868]), Special Collections, Leiden University Library.

[111] *ḤA* 3/116, 22 Mar. 1860.

[112] Al-Bustānī, *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ*, 1: 558–9. The semantics of a *khuṭba* are expansive. In the early Islamic period, it denoted "an official discourse serving various religious, political, legislative, military, and other purposes, and containing diverse themes of piety, policy, urgings to battle, and law". Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, 13.

[113] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 4.

[114] *ḤA* 3/116, 22 Mar. 1860 and Khalīl al-Khūrī, *Kharābāt Sūriyya* (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Sūriyya, 1860), cover. Al-Khūrī also named it a *khiṭāb* in March 1859, when he published an excerpt in the newspaper. *ḤA* 2/64, 26 Mar. 1859.

[115] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 7–8.

[116] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 8.

[117] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 37.

[118] Al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, 32. This translation is based on Stephen Sheehi, "'The culture of the Arabs today'", in El-Ariss (ed.), *The Arab Renaissance*, 6.

Transactions of the Syrian Society (1852), which he edited.[119] In a note separated from the main text by a decorative ligature, he informed readers that the address "was delivered at the request of the executive committee in Beirut at a public session on 14 December 1849 AD".[120] In the entirety of the hundred-plus-page publication, his speech and the 1852 annual presidential address are the only dated entries. He also heightened his visibility to contemporaries and future generations by inundating nearly 25 per cent of *Transactions of the Syrian Society* with his speeches, personal notes, and editorial comments.[121] To ground himself in the historical archive of the Beirut *Nahḍa*, one shaped and curated by Ottoman Syrians, as well as the American missionaries, al-Bustānī in the early 1850s had the foresight to date his 1849 address and start publicizing his words as much as possible.

The ambitious intellectual steadily democratized the *Muʿallim* persona in print in order to attract a larger readership. Early in his public career textbook covers proclaimed authorship by "*Muʿallim* Buṭrus al-Bustānī, the Lebanese".[122] As he took his career in a new literary direction in the second half of the 1850s, he dropped "the Lebanese", i.e. from Mt. Lebanon, to broaden his image and underscore his far-reaching concern for residents of Beirut and its adjacencies.[123] A desire to seem less provincial and more worldly might also have driven him to jettison the endonym. In this respect, al-Bustānī stood apart from several of his counterparts who proudly advertised their geographic provenance throughout their lifetimes on publication covers, such as his colleague Nāṣīf al-Yāzijī "the Lebanese" and the poet Qāsim Abū l-Ḥasan al-Kastī (1830?–1909/10) "the Beiruti".[124] Al-Bustānī dropped his provincial descriptor to appeal to the largest audience possible, while retaining his signature title of *Muʿallim*.

Printing commendations from colleagues helped increase al-Bustānī's visibility and legitimate the *Muʿallim* imprimatur. As was the scholarly practice of the day, al-Bustānī solicited *taqārīẓ* (endorsements) for his abridged grammar *Miftāḥ al-Miṣbāḥ fī Uṣūl al-Ṣarf wal-Naḥw lil-Mubtadiʾīn* (The Lantern's Key to Grammar and Morphology for Beginners) published in 1862.[125] The *taqrīẓ* (sing. of *taqārīẓ*) is "a comparatively brief statement of praise solicited for the promotion of a newly published work and, incidentally, its author",[126] which enabled scholars to "create, consolidate, and document a [professional] network".[127] Among al-Bustānī's seven *taqrīẓ*-writers were his friends and colleagues al-Khūrī, Van Dyck, and al-Yāzijī. His recommenders were building their own cultural careers in Beirut too, and al-Bustānī leveraged their literary and social standing to boost his own position in the local cultural community. In a move of professional collegiality, al-Khūrī reprinted all seven endorsements in his newspaper, advertising the recent publication of "the hardworking scholar, *Muʿallim* Buṭrus al-Bustānī … who

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[119] Al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*, 27–40.

[120] Al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*, 40.

[121] Al-Bustānī (ed.), *Aʿmāl*, [iii], [xiv], 27–40, 61–4, 69–70, and 91–9.

[122] Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Kashf al-Ḥijāb fī ʿIlm al-Ḥisāb* (Beirut: n.p., 1848), cover; and al-Bustānī, *Miṣbāḥ al-Ṭālib fī Bathth al-Maṭālib*, cover.

[123] Al-Bustānī, *Kashf al-Ḥijāb fī ʿIlm al-Ḥisāb*, 2nd ed., cover; al-Bustānī, *Khuṭba*, cover; and al-Bustānī, *Rawḍat al-Tājir fī Mask al-Dafātir*, cover.

[124] Qāsim Abū l-Ḥasan al-Kastī, *Mirʾāt al-Gharība* (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-ʿUmūmiyya, 1863), cover; Qāsim Abū l-Ḥasan al-Kastī, *Turjumān al-Afkār* (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Adabiyya, 1299 [1881/82]), cover; Nāṣīf al-Yāzijī, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb fī Uṣūl Lughat al-Aʿrāb* (Beirut: n.p., 1836), cover; Nāṣīf al-Yāzijī, *Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn* (Beirut: n.p., 1856), cover; and Nāṣīf al-Yāzijī, *al-Jawhar al-Fard fī Uṣūl al-Ṣarf wal-Naḥw* (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Waṭaniyya, 1865), cover.

[125] Al-Bustānī, *Miftāḥ al-Miṣbāḥ fī Uṣūl al-Ṣarf wal-Naḥw lil-Mubtadiʾīn*, 143–4.

[126] Franz Rosenthal, "'Blurbs' (*taqrīẓ*) from fourteenth-century Egypt", *Oriens* 27/28, 1981, 78.

[127] Thomas Bauer, "How to create a network: Zaynaddīn al-Āṯārī and his *Muqarriẓūn*", in Stephan Conermann (ed.), *Everything is on the Move: The Mamluk Empire as a Node in (Trans-)Regional Networks* (Goettingen: V&R Unipress, 2014), 205.

continues to expend energy and work hard for Arabic knowledge and culture and for the good of his compatriots".[128] To prove his continued relevance, al-Bustānī received two new endorsements for the 1867 updated edition of the grammar.[129] Using printed endorsements, he publicly affirmed the quality of *Muʿallim*-issued products.

The printing press prompted literary experimentation in Beirut in the second half of the nineteenth century,[130] and al-Bustānī was not the only person to utilize it to establish a new status and livelihood. In this technological climate of creativity, Khalīl al-Khūrī beat the *Muʿallim* to several innovations.[131] He founded the first periodical *Ḥadīqat al-Akhbār* ("News Garden", 1858)[132] and authored the original novella *Way, Idhan Lastu bi-Ifranjī* (Alas, then I'm not a European, 1859–61).[133] He also set up his own press, *al-Maṭbaʿa al-Sūriyya* (the Syrian Press, 1857), nearly a decade before al-Bustānī established *Maṭbaʿat al-Maʿārif* (the Knowledge Press, 1868).[134] Ibrāhīm al-Najjār (1822–64), the chief physician of the Ottoman military hospital in Beirut, entered the publishing industry at roughly the same time as al-Khūrī.[135] A native of Mt. Lebanon, al-Najjār brought a letterpress back home from France in the early 1850s and commenced publishing. He instrumentalized his connections to the Ottoman administration to print official papers, municipal ordinances, and commercial regulations, as well as his own books.[136] Al-Bustānī and al-Khūrī recognized the impact that al-Najjār and his personal press made on the local publishing landscape.[137] From the multivocal early days of the Beirut print scene, the fact that al-Bustānī remains foregrounded in the historical records is due, in no small part, to his steady publishing efforts under the *Muʿallim* imprint, in addition to his presence in the records of the American Protestant missionaries and other Western archives.

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[128] *ḤA* 5/233, 2 Oct. 1862.

[129] Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Miftāḥ al-Miṣbāḥ fī al-Ṣarf wal-Naḥw lil-Madāris* (Beirut: n.p., 1867), 357–8.

[130] Scholars have cautioned against reading technological determinism on the Beirut *Nahḍa*. Nadia Al-Bagdadi, "Print, script and the limits of freethinking in Arabic letters of the 19th century: the case of al-Shidyaq", *al-Abhath* 48–9, 2000–1, 99–122 and Dana Sajdi, "Print and its discontents: a case for pre-print journalism and other sundry print matters", *The Translator* 15/1, 2009, 105–38.

[131] The most comprehensive biography of Khalīl al-Khūrī is Fruma Zachs, "Pioneers of Syrian patriotism and identity: a re-evaluation of Khalil al-Khuri's contribution", in Adel Beshara (ed.), *The Origins of Syrian Nationhood: Histories, Pioneers and Identity* (London: Routledge, 2011), 91–107.

[132] Edwards, "Serializing Protestantism", 99–102.

[133] Al-Khūrī serialized the novella from October 1859 to March 1861 before releasing it as a standalone publication in late March 1861. *ḤA* 2/93, 13 Oct. 1859; *ḤA* 4/151, 7 Mar. 1861; *ḤA* 4/153, 21 Mar. 1861; and Khalīl al-Khūrī, *Way, Idhan Lastu bi-Ifranjī*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Sūriyya, 1860). See Stephan Guth, "*Adab* as the art to make the right choice between local tradition and Euromania: a comparative analysis of Khalīl al-Khūrī's *Way, idhan lastu bi-Ifranjī!* (1859) and Aḥmed Midḥat's *Felāṭūn Beğ il Rāḳım Efendī* (1875), or: On the threshold of nationalising Middle Eastern culture", in Cathérine Mayeur-Jaouen (ed.), *Adab and Modernity: A "Civilising" Process? (Sixteenth–Twenty-First Century)*, vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 311–45 and Peter Hill, "Arguing with Europe: Eastern civilization versus Orientalist exoticism", *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 132/2, 2017, 405–12.

[134] Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution*, 39–41 and 40 n. 21.

[135] Al-Najjār has recently surfaced in English scholarship, albeit in a cursory fashion. Auji, *Printing Arab Modernity*, 102 and Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution*, 104–5 and 142 n. 65.

[136] After his death al-Najjār's press became known as *al-Maṭbaʿa al-Sharqiyya* (the Oriental Press). Louis Cheikho, "Tārīkh Fann al-Ṭibāʿa fī l-Mashriq", *al-Mashriq* 3/22, 15 Nov. 1900, 1032; Ibrāhīm al-Najjār, *Miṣbāḥ al-Sārī wa-Nuzhat al-Qāriʾ* (Beirut: n.p., 1272–75 [1855/1856–59]), cover; and Ibrāhīm al-Najjār, *Maʿdin al-Ifāda fī l-Ḥabal wal-Wilāda* (Beirut: n.p., 1275 [1858]), cover.

[137] *ḤA* 2/194, 20 Oct. 1859; *ḤA* 7/335, 15 Sept. 1864; and Buṭrus al-Bustānī (ed.), *Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif*, vol. 1 (Beirut: n.p., 1876), 239.

The finale

By the end of the 1860s Buṭrus al-Bustānī had firmly established himself as the patriarch of the Beirut literary world. On 22 January 1868 the Beirut intelligentsia and political dignitaries attended the inaugural session of *al-Jamʿiyya al-ʿIlmiyya al-Sūriyya* (the Syrian Academy, est. 1868), an intellectual confraternity that brought together Christians and Muslims. Al-Bustānī was in attendance that evening, and, at the behest of the Syrian Academy President, he delivered "a very brief beneficial speech extempore (*irtijāl-an*)", according to the local newspaper which al-Khūrī owned and edited.[138] As the *Muʿallim* of Beirut, his presence and words christened the event. On 11 May 1869 al-Bustānī spoke again before this oratorical society. What he said that night was secondary to how he said it. The Syrian Academy periodical recounted none of his thoughts or theories but instead underscored that he spoke "in the best form of eloquence and [rhetorical] elegance (*al-faṣāḥa wal-balāgha*)".[139] Unlike a decade earlier when he published his oration *after* speaking at the Oration Committee, al-Bustānī arrived in 1869 with printed copies of his lecture on civil society in hand.[140] Understanding the enduring power of print over the evanescent nature of orality, he canvassed the grateful audience, gifting them a memento-cum-intellectual treatise of that night when *Muʿallim* Buṭrus was a guest speaker at the Syrian Academy in Beirut.[141] Through print he was able to ensure that his name and his ideas spread among contemporaries to firmly occupy a place within the annals of history.

Al-Bustānī lived to see the material payoff of his work and the strength of his eponymous brand. The *Muʿallim* came to represent new literary and educational commodities, as well as cultural and journalistic endeavours. In the years after the *Khuṭba*, he became the head of a family empire that promoted knowledge and education. With the support of family members, he opened the trans-confessional *Waṭaniyya* School (est. 1863), established *Maṭbaʿat al-Maʿārif* (1868), wrote a two-volume dictionary *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ* (1867–70) and an abridgement *Qaṭr al-Muḥīṭ* (1869), launched the *al-Jinān* ("Gardens") trio of periodicals (1870–71),[142] and started work on *Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif* (*Encyclopédie arabe*), the first volume of which appeared in 1876. The success of al-Bustānī's brand-promotion campaign was clear soon after his death. In 1885 *al-Majmaʿ al-ʿIlmī al-Sharqī* (the Oriental Academy, est. 1882) in Beirut announced the Bustānī Award: a competition for the best "*risāla*" (treatise) on the prompt "Ways to Promote Knowledge in Syria".[143] The notice intentionally placed "*Muʿallim* Buṭrus al-Bustānī" in scare quotes, recognizing the inseparability of the man from his signature title.[144]

Buṭrus al-Bustānī appreciated tradition and innovation, finding professional use in both Arabic oratory and print. To become a public literary magnate, he needed recognition and popularity, which he astutely channelled from past and present forms of knowledge production. Living in a city that searched for instruction and inspiration on how to be in a modern world, he harmonized the proven methods for the transmission of knowledge with the germinating print revolution to his own advantage. Coupling recognized practices with novel strategies, he became the *Muʿallim* of the Beirut *Nahḍa*.

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[138] *ḤA* 11/495, 28 Jan. 1868.

[139] *Majmūʿat al-ʿUlūm* 2/6, 1869, 263.

[140] Al-Bustānī, *Khiṭāb fī l-Hayʾa al-Ijtimāʿiyya wal-Muqābala bayn al-Awāʾid al-ʿArabiyya wal-Ifranjiyya*.

[141] *Majmūʿat al-ʿUlūm* 2/6, 1869, 263–4.

[142] The periodicals were *al-Jinān* ("Gardens", 1870), *al-Janna* ("Garden", 1870), and *al-Junayna* ("Little Garden", 1871).

[143] Niʿma Shadīd Yāfith, "al-Jāʾiza al-Bustāniyya", *al-Muqtaṭaf* 9/9, June 1885, 561.

[144] Yāfith, "al-Jāʾiza al-Bustāniyya", 561.