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The Modern Arabic Book: Design as Agent of Cultural Progress

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Chapter I

Ideological Beginnings of the Arabic Printed Book: Early Printing Presses in Late 19th Century Beirut



الفصل السابع

في صبغة الماضي

الماضي ما دلّ على معنى وُجد في زمان قبل
الزمان الذي انت فيه . وهو يبنى على فتح آخره
مطلقاً وكل ما تحرك قبله ما لم يكن همزة وصل
فيكسر كما في انطلق ونحوه او عين ثلاثي فيختلف
كما علمت في بابيه ^(١) . غير ان حركة آخره وما اتصل
به قد تكون لفظاً بحسب الوضع . وقد يحول دونها
مانع من الاعلال او غيره فتكون تقديرًا ^(٢) . وعلى
ذلك يجري كل حكم للبناء في كل فعل فيُقاس
عليه بالاجمال

(١) اي فيختلف حركته لانه يكون تارة مفتوحاً كما في ضرب
وتارة مضموماً كما في فضل وتارة مكسوراً كما في حسب فلا
يدخل تحت ضابط

(٢) تكون حركة الاخر تقديرًا في نحو رمى . وحركة ما اتصل
به في نحو مدّ وقام . فان الساكن فيهما من الاخر وما قبله ساكن

مثال من كتاب فصل الخطاب في اصول لغة الاعراب

Chapter I

Ideological beginnings of the Arabic printed book:

Early printing presses in late nineteenth century Beirut

The role of the early independent presses in late nineteenth century Beirut should not be underestimated; they helped spread education and liberal thinking, they set a model for the educational Arabic printed book, and sowed the seeds for progressive and modern independent Arab publishing. The latter has become one of the main characteristics of publishing in Lebanon, making this small country a leading cultural center for the Arab world for decennia. The two main institutions of educational publishing in Beirut in the nineteenth century were the American Mission Press (the oldest press and publisher) and the Imprimerie Catholique (the longest operating one).

1.1. Rivalry and progress

Arabic books printed in Lebanon, until the early nineteenth century, consisted mainly of Christian religious texts produced in monastic presses.⁶ With the arrival of the American Mission Press to Beirut in 1834, this began to slowly change. A fierce competition ensued between the two rival Christian denominations: the Protestants and the Maronites⁷ (affiliated with the Roman Catholic church), which made Beirut into an active printing and publishing center.

The rivalry between the Puritan American Protestants and the indigenous Maronite church was a struggle between an aggressive movement towards effecting change (or a return to the pure source of the Christian scriptures) and a conservative survivalism of the traditions and rites in the face of foreign intrusions (and Christian heresies). The American missionaries, according to Makdisi: “regarded themselves as the ‘artillery of heaven,’ divinely inspired men and women who could unilaterally reshape the face of the world, confident of victory as time flew forward to its

⁶ The first printing presses in Lebanon were the St. Antoine of Quzḥayya (with its first psalter printed in 1610) and the printing press set up by ‘Abdallah al-Zāḥir in the monastery of St. John the Baptist in Šuwayr (founded 1734). Fouad E. Boustany, ‘Les Libanais et le Livre,’ *Le livre et le liban*, Camille Aboussouan, Ed. (Paris: UNESCO, 1982) 146. Joseph P. Nasrallah. *L'imprimerie au Liban* (Harissa: Imprimerie de Saint Paul, 1949). 1-8, 26-45. Wahid Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*. Évolution de l'environnement culturel (1706-1787). (Tunis: Publications de l'Institut Supérieur de Documentation No. 8, 1985) 58-70, 123-187.

⁷ The Maronites are the largest Christian community in Lebanon. The Maronite Church was named after the hermit St. Maroun (410) and originated from Cyrrhus in the northwest of modern Syria and its border with Turkey (H. Badr Ed. 272). They moved to Mount Lebanon at the beginning of the tenth century and this remains the seat of their patriarchate. In the 12th century when the Crusaders ruled the coast of Syria, they embraced the Roman Catholic doctrine and the supremacy of the Pope (A. Hourani. 97). They have enjoyed a special status in Lebanon under the Ottoman *millet* system and established their main stronghold of Mount Lebanon as an independent *mutaṣarrıfıyya* (or administrative district) within the ottoman Empire (A. Hourani. 429). For further reading on the Maronites of Lebanon, Cf. Badr, Habib, Suad abou el Rouss Slim, Joseph Abou Nohra, Eds. *Christianity: A History in the Middle East* (Beirut: Middle East Council of Churches, 2005).

much anticipated end.”⁸ Makdisi further states that: “more than anything else, this cultural clash occurred at the meeting point of two powerful currents of history. The former was represented by an expansive American missionary movement for which unconstrained individual freedom of conscience had to lead inevitably to an evangelical Protestantism, and no accommodation with other religions could long be tolerated. The latter emerged out of an Ottoman Arab orthodoxy that regarded the mutual recognition of different religious communities [the *millet* system]⁹ as a guarantee of order and harmony in a profoundly unequal multi-religious Islamic society.”¹⁰ This fierce competition eventually prompted the Jesuits to counter the evangelizing activities of the Protestants by setting up similar educational institutions and their own printing press which rivaled in quality of equipment and production capacity that of the American Mission Press in Beirut. They appealed through the French consul in Damascus to the French King to support the Catholic missions for Syria by supporting them financially so that they could devote themselves to their vocation and be able to offer free education to the Maronite and Roman Catholic students.¹¹

The growing spread of the American mission schools, hospitals and churches led to growing objections and complaints from the local Christian clergy to the Ottoman authorities. In 1897 there were, according to Jessup: “seventeen thousand children (of whom eight thousand were girls) in Protestant schools in Syria and Palestine, five orphanages, and thirty-six hospitals and dispensaries. In Syria alone there were 150 American schools.”¹² The conflict between those two religious camps can be attributed to a conflict between their divergent perception of an ideal and virtuous society. The Eastern Church of the Maronites, following the edicts of the Roman Catholic church, assumed a paternal attitude to its followers. It positioned itself as the sole mediator of the holy scriptures, and the trusted interpreter of the holy scriptures to a widely illiterate population. It saw itself as the protector of the simple-minded from the heretic and impure foreign intrusions. In return, the Maronite church required unquestioning loyalty and submission to the Papal authority. The American Protestant missionaries on the other hand, advocated a more ‘liberal’ and unmediated reading of the holy scriptures. It invited the individual to fully comprehend through direct reading and discussion the holy scriptures. Each person, including women, had to be educated in order to

⁸ Ussama Makdisi, *The Artillery of Heaven: American missionaries and the failed conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaka, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008) 4.

⁹ The *millet* system, within the heterogeneous Ottoman Empire (1300–1923), referred to self-governing non-Muslim communities, with administrative autonomy, yet responsible towards the central government for collecting taxes. Encyclopedia Britannica. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/382871/millet>.

¹⁰ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 5.

¹¹ A. L. Tibawi, *American interests in Syria, 1800-1901: a study of educational, literary and religious work*. (Oxford University Press. Oxford : Clarendon. 1966) 46.

¹² Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 171.

become capable of thinking for themselves, and of drawing their own conclusions about their faith. This 'foreign' Protestant approach inadvertently planted the seed of liberal thinking, which was one of several factors that set in motion an Arab modernity and the cultural awakening known as *al-nahḍa*.¹³

The Ottoman authorities became concerned about the 'negative' effects of these institutions and the Western education they offered which fostered liberal thinking and nationalism amongst its pupils (especially those of non-Muslim ethnic groups), and which was seen as a threat to the unity of the multinational Ottoman empire and its laws.¹⁴ The third cause of friction was the publications that were produced by these institutions which did not always abide by Ottoman law. For example, in the 1860s the conversion of some Muslims to Christianity as a result of missionary efforts caused the Ottoman authorities to impose restrictions and censor missionary publications, for evangelizing amongst Muslims was illegal under Ottoman law. Further in the mid 1870s, after the eruption of the Bulgarian revolt (1875), a new regulations was enforced that required all publications to be sent for approval to the Ministry of Public Instruction before going to print. However, the missionaries continued their publication activities sometimes without the tedious procedure of acquiring permissions and at the risk of their books getting confiscated.¹⁵ In a desperate attempt to reclaim its subjects from the influence of foreign missionaries, the Ottoman Empire made a formal commitment in 1856 to treat its Muslims and non-Muslim subjects equally. This attempt at saving the Empire's sovereignty unfortunately failed; it was late in starting at a moment in history when "men and women influenced by the Protestant mission in places like Beirut had already begun to chart their own sense of civilization."¹⁶

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the American missionaries reconciled themselves to the coexistence of different religions and the "ecumenical reality they had for so long labored against."¹⁷ They adopted a more universal approach focusing their efforts on secular education. Their most famous (surviving) legacy is the Syrian Protestant College (SPC) which changed its name in 1922 to the American University of Beirut, to clearly state its secular educational programs and openness to all religions and denominations.¹⁸ In 1920, Howard Bliss,

¹³ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 4-5. This movement is referred to in the text as the *Nahḍa* movement.

¹⁴ Çağrı Erhan, "Ottoman Official Attitudes Towards American Missionaries," *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol. XXX (2000): 191-212. This is revised and enlarged from a paper delivered to International Conference on "The United States and the Middle East: Cultural Encounters," Yale University. 7-8 December 2000. (PDF) 333-335

¹⁵ Ibid. Erhan, 2000. 333-335

¹⁶ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 186.

¹⁷ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 175.

¹⁸ Ibid. Makdisi, 2008. 175.

the son of Daniel Bliss (founder and president of Syrian Protestant College from 1823–1916), who succeeded his father as president of the University, proclaimed the advent of the Modern Missionary, one who “does not believe that Christianity is the sole channel through which divine and saving truth has been conveyed. And this persuasion he admits ungrudgingly and gratefully. For it at once enlarges his spiritual fellowship. All men who are themselves seeking God and who are striving to lead others to God become his companions and his fellow workers.”¹⁹ Bliss confessed that such a missionary “comes to supplement, not solely to create. He prays for all men with sympathy—for all mosques and temples and synagogues as for all churches.”²⁰ “He would urge the Church to remember that Christianity is nothing unless it is universal [...] He would bid her rehabilitate in the vocabulary of religion the noble words *reason, rational, free-thinking, natural*.”²¹ Incidentally, this statement came sixty years after Buṭrus al-Bustānī first advocated a “liberal vision of coexistence as a modern way of life in the Arab East.”²²

This crucial and transformative point in the cultural history of Lebanon was greatly influenced by printing and publishing in the Arab Mediterranean. The books that were published and read shaped intellectual and social life at the end of the nineteenth century. The two main printing establishments whose production is studied and analyzed on the pages that follow are the American Press and the Imprimerie Catholique. I would argue that both institutions, in divergent ways, have set high standards for the printed Arabic book through their respective book design and typographic inventions. Each had its own visual design approach that clearly expressed their opposing religious ideology and philosophy. The American Press’s puritan Protestant ideology that focused on individual reading of the scriptures, required a clear and stark representation of the text—even its Arabic fonts were less calligraphic with low-contrast and slanted strokes that implied plain Arabic handwriting. Both streamlined fonts and non-ornamental layouts were fitting for a religious ideology that proclaimed a break with the traditions and rites of the church. By comparison, the Imprimerie Catholique was rooted in tradition and strove to preserve the old ways, its visual language naturally reflected this; its publications were rich in ornaments that not only make a direct link to the beauty of old manuscripts, but also worked in the tradition of venerating the text by beautifying its presentation, and thus lending it authority. Not only were the layouts rich in visual presentation, but also the fonts designed and used at the Imprimerie Catholique were closer in detail, complexity and style to the traditional Arabic calligraphic scripts.

¹⁹ Howard Bliss, “The Modern Missionary,” *Atlantic Monthly* (May 1920), 667. Betty Anderson, *The American University of Beirut, Arab Nationalism & Liberal Education* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 53. Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 214.

²⁰ Op. cit. Bliss, 1920. 667. Makdisi, 2008. 214.

²¹ Op. cit. Bliss, 1920. 675.

²² Ibid. Makdisi, 2008. 214.

In this chapter I would like to present how both the American Press and the Imprimerie Catholique, each in their own right, have established conventions for Arabic book design. How their printed books that have shaped reading habits and the manner in which knowledge is processed and disseminated in Lebanon and the Arab World, have left a lasting influence on cultural life in the Arab world well into the twentieth century.

1.2. The American Press (1822-1964)

1.2.1. Context

The American Press was established in 1822 as a means for supporting the missionary work of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions²³ in the Near East. The story of the press is closely linked to the history of the American Presbyterian missionaries, their struggles and travails. Therefore, one has to first sketch briefly the story of the American Protestant mission to Ottoman Syria and Palestine in the second half of the nineteenth century, and highlight a few key moments that affected the creation and production of the press.

The first half of the nineteenth century was a period of considerable social, political and educational change in the Ottoman Empire. Diplomacy between the Ottoman *Sublime Porte* and the Western nations increased with the British playing an important role therein. The American missionaries started arriving in the Middle East following in the footsteps of American traders who sailed to Alexandria and the southern ports of Turkey. There was at the time of their arrival no American consular representation in the Ottoman Empire and so they relied on the British Consulate to help them with their administrative affairs. The initial ambition of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was to first reform the Jewish community of the Middle East. It soon became evident to them after setting up missions in Palestine and then in Lebanon, that it was practically impossible to “penetrate the highly insular Jewish community.”²⁴ It was equally impossible to convert the Muslim populations (for whom conversion was illegal and

²³ “ABCFM [The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions] was a Protestant mission agency founded in 1810 and chartered by the state of Massachusetts in 1812. It dispatched missionaries around the world for religious ends chiefly, but also to pursue general altruistic labor, including founding schools and medical facilities. Between 1820—when the American Board’s first personnel arrived in Izmir—and the second decade of the twentieth century, the organization established more than 20 mission stations, 50 boarding and high schools, and ten colleges in Anatolia and its surroundings. Unquestionably, the ABCFM [The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions] was the most significant American presence in the region during this era.” American Board Pamphlet Collection, Digital Library for International Research (DLIS) <http://www.dlir.org/arit-pamphlet-collection.html>

²⁴ Op. cit. Erhan, 2000. 191-212.

punishable under Ottoman law). Consequently, they resigned themselves to converting the various Eastern Christian communities, which they referred to as ‘nominal Christians.’²⁵

The early pioneers came to the Near East with the mission to spread the Protestant doctrine and to spiritually conquer the ‘old Eastern biblical lands.’²⁶ They came equipped with little knowledge about the cultures they aimed to convert and with prejudices earned from their failures at home to convert the native American tribes and/or to prevent their annihilation. However, starting with a small staff and limited resources, but with much conviction, they contributed to the ushering in of a new era of modernization and a major cultural and intellectual change in the Near East. They managed to establish a new educational system consisting of local schools accessible to the common people, as well as Beirut’s most reputed institution of higher education and university hospital.²⁷ They produced religious but also scientific publications in the Arabic language, and set a trend in book design and typesetting, thus contributing to the flourishing of intellectual activities and publishing in Beirut and the Arab region.

The first two pioneer missionaries to the Holy Land, Pliny Fisk (1792–1825) and Levi Parsons (1792–1822), arrived in Smyrna (Izmir) in 1819. They spent their first years learning the languages of the Ottoman Empire (Italian, Greek, Armenian, Turkish and Arabic), as well as traveling between Palestine, Mount Lebanon and Smyrna, acquainting themselves and researching the feasibility of setting up an American Protestant mission in the Arab Levant. Due to the Greek war for independence (1821-1832),²⁸ living in the Ottoman Empire became difficult for European (and American) subjects whose countries were sympathizers and/or supporters of the Greek revolutionaries. So in 1822, Fisk moved to the safety of the island of Malta, which was under British protection and home to other Protestant missions. Fisk arrived in Malta to find that Rev. Daniel Temple (1789–1851), the American Press’ first manager from 1822 to 1833,²⁹ had brought with him from Boston a printing press for the use of the American mission in the Levant. In 1823, the American missionaries returned to Beirut and were advised to make it the center of their activities. Beirut was then considered safer and a place where they could enjoy British consular protection should the need arise. Their activities were still concentrated on learning foreign languages,

²⁵ Op. cit. Erhan, 2000. 191-212.

²⁶ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 85-88.

²⁷ The institutions are the American University of Beirut (AUB), and the American University Hospital (AUH), both are still in existence and continue to flourish.

²⁸ The Greek war of independence (also known as the Greek revolution) was waged by Greek revolutionaries between 1821 and 1832, with later assistance from Russia, the United Kingdom, France and others against the Ottoman Empire. *New World Encyclopedia*. http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Greek_War_of_Independence.

²⁹ *Centennial of the American Press of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. Beirut, Syria 1822–1922* (Beirut: The American Press, 1922) 39.

and distributing religious literature in the vernacular Arabic language which was supplied to them by the British mission press of the Church Missionary Society in Malta.³⁰

The American Protestants have long been aware of the power of print and printed books for spreading their religious ideology and building native Protestant communities. They arrived in a part of the world where the majority of the population (except the privileged few and the clergy) were illiterate. Although there already existed native elementary schools attached to local religious communities such as the Roman Catholic missionary schools, the Greek Orthodox schools, the Muslim traditional *kuttāb* and *madrasa*, these schools were few and not of very high standard.³¹ So in preparation for their evangelizing work, they needed to establish an educational system of free primary schools as a means of gaining more converts, as well as seminaries for the training of future local Protestant missionaries. Their first primary school opened in Beirut in 1824, eventually leading to the establishment of several other schools in villages in Mount Lebanon, in Tripoli and around Beirut—and ten years later they opened their first primary school for girls in Beirut. They set up a printing press in Beirut in 1834 (which was only operational some two years later), the first native Protestant church in 1848, and received an Ottoman legal recognition of Protestantism in the empire in 1850.³² The 1860 Lebanese civil war (between the Maronites and the Druze in Mount Lebanon) was a factor in precipitating foreign aid and sympathy for the Christian victims, and the refugees that escaped to Beirut for safety. The city became the arena of many foreign missions, a new Arabic press, reformist Muslim intellectuals, and literary circles. Beirut thus became a vibrant city thrown into the winds of change.³³ What followed was “an intense competition among Americans, European Protestants, Jesuits, Arabs and Ottomans to dominate, or at least profit from, a distinctive, multinational and multi-religious Ottoman modernity.”³⁴ As Jessup puts it in his accounts, *Fifty-Three Years in Syria*, “the popular mind was awakened from the sleep of ages.”³⁵

The American mission's activities prompted others like the Jesuits (whose activities in publishing and education are particularly relevant and are discussed later in this chapter) to come to Syria in 1831 and to invest in the educational system and in publishing material that posed a challenge to the American mission, thus forcing them to reconsider their educational program and to open it to secular instruction of the practical and scientific kind. In response to the Jesuit and

³⁰ Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 24, 29.

³¹ Op.cit. Tibawi, 1966. 66-67.

³² Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 164.

³³ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 68.

³⁴ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 171.

³⁵ Ibid. Makdisi, 2008. 171.

other local schools' competition they established in Beirut in 1862 an independent 'literary institution', with a more liberal curriculum which was the first step towards the creation of the institution of higher education known as the Syrian Protestant College (established in 1866 with Rev. Daniel Bliss as its president). In 1920, its name was changed to reflect a more secular scientific education, becoming the American University of Beirut (and still operating under this name to this day).³⁶ Next to this prominent college, the American Press attached to the college was another feather in the American mission's cap.

1.2.2. The American Press: Origin and chronological developments (1822-1964)

The American Press was first established in Malta in 1822, but it did not print in the Arabic language until after it moved to Beirut in 1834 and effectively started printing in 1835-36. Before that time, all Arabic books and bibles used in the missionary schools, and for distribution by the missionaries, were imported from the British-run press of the English Church Missionary Society, founded in Malta in 1822. In 1824, the American Press in Malta received its second printing press, and in 1825, Jonas King (1792–1869) went to Europe to procure Armenian and Arabic printing types and materials. The Arabic font was only delivered to Malta some five years later, in late 1829, and was cast like the Arabic fonts of the English Church Missionary Society press by the London foundry and printing establishment of Richard Watts.³⁷ Because of the lack of an able printer, Homan Hallock was sent to Malta in 1826 specially to assist in the technical operation of the press. Still no printing in the Arabic language could be undertaken because the printers were unfamiliar with the language.

In 1826, one of the native converts, Fāris al-Šidyāq (1804–1887), was transferred to Malta to assist with the production of Arabic books and for his own safety following the persecution of his brother As'ad al-Šidyāq (1797-1830), the first Lebanese Protestant convert and martyr.³⁸ Since there was no work for him in Malta at the American Press because the Arabic font had still not arrived, he was instead employed by the Church Missionary Society press as general assistant in the Arabic

³⁶ Betty Anderson, *The American University of Beirut, Arab Nationalism & Liberal Education* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011) 25.

³⁷ Op. cit. Tibawi, 1996. 52-53. Cf. Geoffrey Roper, "The Beginning of Arabic Printing by the ABCFM, 1822-1841" *Harvard Library Bulletin*. 54.

³⁸ In 1820, As'ad Šidyāq (1797-1830) met Jonas King, a missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which led to his conversion to Protestantism. He was excommunicated under the automatic excommunication edict issued by the Maronite Patriarch Yūsuf Ḥubayš (1823–1845) that prohibited all dealings with the evangelical missionaries. As'ad was later detained in the Monastery of Qannūbīn in the Qadiša valley where he died in 1830. Cf. Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Qiṣṣat As'ad al-Šidyāq (The Story of As'ad al-Šidyāq)*, (Beirut: 1860). Shidyāq, A., & Bird, I., *Brief memoir of Asaad Esh Shidiak: an Arab young man, of the Maronite Roman Catholic Church*. (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, printers, 1833). Buṭrus ibn Būlus Bustānī, As'ad ibn Yūsuf Shidyāq, *Qiṣṣat As'ad al-Shidyāq : munāẓarah wa-ḥawār multahab ḥawla ḥurrīyat al-ḍamīr* (Rā's Bayrūt: Dār al-Ḥamrā', 1992). Fawwāz Ṭrābulṣī, 'Azīz al-'Azmah, *Aḥmad Fāris al-Šudyāq, Silsilat al-A'māl al-Maḡhūla* (Beirut: Riad El-Rayyes Books, 1995) 13-17.

department. Originally the Arabic types of the Church Missionary Society press were bought from England and cast in London by Richard Watts. However, in the 1830s a new font was cut and cast locally from calligraphic models, “almost certainly prepared by Fāris al-Šidyāq, who had been a scribe in his youth.”³⁹ This British press produced, between 1825 and 1842, several religious, linguistic, scientific, educational and literary Arabic works under Fāris al-Šidyāq’s direction.⁴⁰ These publications were inventive in their typographic design and modern layouts.

In 1826, Dr. Eli Smith (1801–1857) arrived in Malta to undertake the preparation and printing of missionary literature in Arabic. Soon after, he left Malta to travel to Beirut and Egypt in order to learn and improve his knowledge of the Arabic language. In 1828, and under the impending threat of war between Greece and the Ottomans (and with the British siding with Greece), the missionaries were advised to leave Beirut for the safety of Malta. Four years later, and following Syria’s invasion by Muḥammad ‘Ali and the relaxation of laws over the non-Muslim subjects under his Egyptian administration, the missionaries felt that these were more favorable conditions for continuing their missionary work in Syria. In 1832, the American Board CFM board decided to close the press in Malta and to transfer one part to Smyrna and the other to Beirut where printing in Arabic could finally begin. In 1830, the American Press in Malta employed “8 men in office and bindery with Hallock as head printer. Most of this establishment moved to Izmir in 1833.”⁴¹ Once the preparations were completed, the Arabic part of the American Press moved to Beirut in 1834. It was installed in the two-story building of the Seminary Building, the American School for Girls, in Bāb Ya‘qūb (Beirut).⁴² Two years after its establishment, the press consisted of no more than two rooms, a printer with a couple of helpers, one Arabic font and a handpress, and its production was limited.⁴³ The press had three obstacles to overcome for it to become operational. It had to have texts to print, a professional printer to operate the presses, and a proper Arabic font.

The American Press was under the direction of Rev. Dr. Eli Smith from 1834 until his death in 1857. From the outset, Eli Smith realized that the type that Jonas King had obtained from England was defective and incomplete, making the literature produced by the press unacceptable for

³⁹ Geoffrey Roper, “History of the Book in the Muslim World,” *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, Micahel F. Suarez, S. J. and H. R. Woudhuysen, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 334.

⁴⁰ Ibid. Roper, 2010. 334.

⁴¹ Op. cit. Roper, *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 58.

⁴² Bāb Ya‘qūb the old city wall gate where Riyād al-Solḥ Square is today. Cf. Nasrallah, 50.

⁴³ BFMPC (Board of the Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church). *Centennial of the American Press. Beirut, Syria 1822-1922*. (Beirut: American Press. 1923) 11.

educated Arab readers.⁴⁴ After much negotiation, a former printing apprentice from Malta, the British George Percy Badger (1815–1888) was employed on a one-year contract. Badger set out to remedy the defects of the Arabic font. Following a collection of calligraphic specimens drawn by Egyptian and Lebanese calligraphers that Eli Smith had gathered, and visits to the mission press in Smyrna, and other printing presses in the region (Šuwayr and Šafad), he set out to produce punches and matrices of Arabic sorts. He finally managed to get the press to start printing in 1836. “Badger’s skill as a typographer is evident in some of the earliest books, especially Nāšif al-Yāziġi’s grammar, with its elaborate decorated title-page and *‘unwān*, composed with fleurons and an engraved *tuġrā’*.”⁴⁵ After his one-year contract ended (on 26 October 1836), Badger returned to Malta to work for the Church Missionary Society Arabic Press. For the following two years after his departure, until the end of 1939, the American Press in Beirut remained operational under Badger’s English apprentice.

Then the press was idle for two years, due on one hand to a change in policy of the The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions board to focus more on evangelization and move away from educational and Arabic language books, and on the other hand, to the Ottoman-Egyptian conflict where the Europeans intervened to help restore Ottoman rule over Syria.⁴⁶ The press was operational again on the arrival of a new professional printer in 1941, George C. Hurter (1813–1894), who was also a British citizen, born in Malta to a Swiss father and English mother.⁴⁷ He had formerly worked at the London Missionary Society’s Greek press, then moved to America and worked as printer at the *New York Herald*, and in January 1841 was appointed by the The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions as printer for the Syrian mission. He arrived in Beirut in April 1841 and remained in charge of the American Press in Beirut until his retirement and return to Boston in 1864.⁴⁸ In 1841, the new ‘American’ Arabic font arrived in Beirut

⁴⁴ The Arabic font followed the style of Wilkin-Martin-Watts, employed by the Church Missionary Society Malta Arabic books of the period, but had an “admixture of less familiar sorts such as an unusual *alif-lam-alif* ligature with the second *alif* bent across almost horizontally.” These Watts types lacked an authentic calligraphic quality which rendered them unattractive to educated Arab readers. Roper, *Harvard Library Bulletin*, 61. Roper described the fonts as an unpleasant foreign look that offended the aesthetic sensitivities of educated Arab readers, quoting from a report by the mission in Malta dating from 1831: “they generally dislike the characters of the book issued from our Press.” The Church Missionary Society set out in 1838 to produce and cast new Arabic fonts under the supervision of George Percy Badger (1815–1888) and Fāris al-Šidyāq. Cf. Geoffrey Roper, *Arabic Printing in Malta 1825–1845. Its History and its Place in the development of Print Culture in the Arab Middle East*, (PhD Thesis, unpublished), University of Durham 1988. 261.

⁴⁵ Op. cit. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 59. For a description of this book, *Faṣl al-Ḥiṭāb fi Uṣūl Luġat al-I’rāb*, consult section 2.2.5.2 of this chapter.

⁴⁶ Muhammad Ali effectively ruled Egypt from 1805–48, but was not officially recognized as ruler of Egypt under Ottoman suzerainty until 1841. He attempted carving an Arab empire for himself out of the Ottoman Sultan’s territory and he set out on a military campaign, first conquering and occupying Syria from 1831–1840.

⁴⁷ Ibid. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 59.

⁴⁸ Ibid. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 59.

at the same time as the new professional printer George C. Hurter.⁴⁹ From then on, the American Press in Beirut was completely self-sustained, having its own press, types and printer. In 1847, Dr. Eli Smith returned and settled in Beirut. In 1848, he started his work on his seminal new Arabic bible, dedicating his life to this work until his death on 11 January 1857. After his death Dr. Cornelius Van Alen Van Dyck, M.D. continued his work, and with his Arab assistants, brought this long-labored new Arabic translation of the bible to completion (in 1865). In 1851, the second font of Arabic type was cast.⁵⁰ In 1853, the third Arabic font was cast and a steam-press was received from Smyrna.⁵¹ It was the first steam press in Beirut⁵² and was a considerable technical improvement on the original equipment of the press.

In 1867, Mr. Samuel Hallock arrived in Beirut and remained as the printing superintendent until 1882. He was then succeeded by Mr. Warren R. Glocker from 1822 to 1922.⁵³ The American Press flourished during that period and continued to print books for the professors of the Syrian Protestant College (SPC) as well as other authors and intellectuals in the city. It printed for intellectuals like Buṭrus al-Bustānī, Ibrāhīm al-Yāziǧī, and helped launch ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Qabbānī’s newspaper *Tamarāt al-Funūn* (*Fruits of the Arts*). It became one of several printers and publishers in the city and a part of the growing cultural awakening. In 1870, the Syria Mission was later transferred from the The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions,⁵⁴ and its press operated as a commercial printing press under a number of managers: Rev. Henry H. Jessup, D.D. (manager from 1870–1883), Rev. Samuel Jessup, D.D. (manager from 1884–1895), Mr. Edward G. Freyer (manager from 1895–1913), Mr. Charles A. Dana (manager from 1913–1922).⁵⁵ By 1883, the facilities of the American Press consisted of three large steam-operated presses, five hand-presses, one lithographic press, fine binding and foiling facilities.⁵⁶ In 1886 the manager of the press claimed that “the American Press had a greater variety of work than any single publishing house in the [Near] East. Employing more than fifty persons, it acted as a depository for five missionary Bible societies, had departments for publishing,

⁴⁹ Dagmar Glass, *Malta, Beirut, Leipzig, and Beirut again: Eli Smith, the American Syria Mission and the Spread of Arabic Typography in 19th Century Lebanon*. Beirut 1998. (Beyrouth Zokak el-Blat(t). 16). 24.

⁵⁰ Rev. Thomas Laurie, D.D. Ed. (1819–1870), Rev. H. H. Jessup, D. D. (1870–1901) Ed. *Brief Chronology of the Syrian Mission: 1819–1870 Under the ABCFM, 1870–1901 Under the American Presbyterian Church* (Beirut: American Mission Press, 1901) 11.

⁵¹ Op. cit. Laurie, Jessup, 1901. 12.

⁵² Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 11.

⁵³ Op. cit. Laurie, Jessup, 1901. 17. Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 39.

⁵⁴ Op. cit. Laurie, Jessup, 1901. 18.

⁵⁵ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 39.

⁵⁶ Shahīn Makariyus, *Al-Ma‘ārif fi Suriya, al-Muḡamma‘ al-‘Ilmī al-Šarqī* (*Knowledge in Syria, the Eastern Scientific Association*), January 1883. Printed speech. 465.

binding, lithography, electrotyping, stereotyping, type-making, punch-cutting, map engraving, wood engraving, 'job printing in many languages', and weekly and monthly paper editing."⁵⁷ In 1871, the press acquired its own independent building near the Evangelical Church in Beirut, and became known for the coming 50 years as 'The American Press'.⁵⁸ In 1901, the Riggs family in Auburn (Alabama, USA) donated a new printing machine to the press.⁵⁹ In 1922, to commemorate its 100-year anniversary, it relocated to its new "steel and concrete buildings, the Halsey Memorial Buildings," and acquired new machinery: an "Arabic and English Linotype machine and a new Kelly Automatic Press with a capacity of 3600 impressions an hour," and a "new bindery on the second floor of the larger building."⁶⁰ In December of that year the press held a celebration of its centennial anniversary on the new premises and it published the following year (1923) a commemorative book of the event that included a brief history of the press and its achievements, an entitled *Centennial of the American Press* (Beirut: The American Press, 1922). On Wednesday, August 5, 1964, at 10.00 am, following a meeting by the Protestant Association, with the Secretary of the Publishing Committee, the Secretary of the Senodos, and the then director of the press Mr. Rizqallah al-Ḥalabī, it was decided that the American Press would close its doors for good on the 31st of December 1964. The employees were dismissed gradually as their work was completed. The last two books to be printed were *Kitāb al-Tarnīm* (a hymn book) and *Qāmūs al-Kitāb al-Muqaddas* (*A Dictionary of the Holy Bible*).⁶¹ In 1976, the Librairie du Liban that owned the building of the original American Press sold all the old printing types that had remained and broke up the old presses, thus ending any physical evidence of the American Press and its print shop.⁶²

1.2.3. Ideology and editorial program: religious and educational literature

The American Press was originally set up for the production of missionary literature to assist the missionaries in their work. The need for education and the furnishing of educational material was complementary to the work at the missionary schools and seminaries. As stated in its centennial publication: "its supreme aim [was] to work hand in hand with every Missionary where the Arabic language is spoken, and help him or her spread the Word of God, and to promote the

⁵⁷ Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 250-251. Cf. *Illustrated Catalogue and Price List of Publications of the American Mission Press of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Beirut, Syria* (Beirut: 1887, 1896).

⁵⁸ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 6.

⁵⁹ Op. cit. Laurie, Jessup, *Brief Chronology of the Syrian Mission: 1819-1870*, 38.

⁶⁰ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 1.

⁶¹ Letter in the archive of the American Mission Press. American University of Beirut. Box 1, File 2, Aug. 5 1964.

⁶² Hala Bizri, "Le Livre et L'Edition au Liban dans la Première Moitié du XXe Siècle : Essai de reconstitution d'une mémoire disparue," Unpublished Doctorate Thesis. (Versailles: Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, 2013) 169-170.

gospel of clean, character-building literature.”⁶³ It published and printed “more than 2,200,000 volumes of Scriptures,” and “over 1,240,000,000 pages of Bibles, commentaries, hymn books, schoolbooks, stories, tracts, etc.”⁶⁴ The beginnings of the American Press were fraught with obstacles. It was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that they began producing important secular works of scientific value. Between 1835–1842, the press had only produced 29 titles: 11 Biblical texts, 8 piety and religious ethics, 3 religious instructions (mainly for children), 2 spelling and alphabet, 2 grammar, 1 arithmetic, and 1 medicine.⁶⁵ However, with the flourishing of the Syrian Protestant College (SPC) and the growing demand for textbooks, the press became the first highly productive and independent press (and publisher) in mid nineteenth century Beirut.

Since 1837, The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions had wanted to produce a new version of the Arabic Bible written in a simplified and accessible form of the Arabic language. In 1847, after listening to deliberations by Dr. Eli Smith on the benefits of such a new Arabic Bible, the mission formally decided to start the work and entrusted Dr. Smith with this task. This version of the Arabic Bible, which became known as the Van Dyck, was soon adopted as the standard by all Protestant missionaries in the Arabic speaking world. At the completion of the Arabic Bible in 1865, the The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions no longer wished to support the press financially, and so encouraged the press to print on a commercial basis for others in order to sustain itself.⁶⁶ With the growing competition from other local printing presses and the growing demands of the Syrian Protestant College for textbooks,⁶⁷ the American Press started printing general and educational secular works for local authors. It printed “a notable series of scientific and medical textbooks during the period when its literary and medical departments used Arabic as the language of instruction.”⁶⁸ However the success of the college attracted students of different origins, and to accommodate the diversity of languages within

⁶³ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 39.

⁶⁴ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 38.

⁶⁵ Op. cit. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 58.

⁶⁶ “The missionaries in Syria argued that while they understood that the press needed to be kept in its place as a secondary instrumentality, they believed it was a necessity as a ‘front’ for the mission’s cause and goals, as well as a way to make money to offset its cost. As such, they suggested it remain in operation, via job works, with the intention that it be eventually turned over ‘to private hands and thus relieve the Board and mission of all care and responsibility’ for it.” ABC 16.8.1, v. 4, Syria Mission to Anderson, 6 May 1858. See, ABC 16.8.1, Documents, Reports, Misc. Letters A-D, v. 6, Annual Report of the Syria Mission, 1860. Cf. Hala Auji, “Between Script and Print: Exploring Publications of the American Syria Mission and the Nascent Press in the Arab World, 1840–1860” Unpublished Doctoral Thesis (Binghamton University, State University of New York, 2013). PDF. 136-139.

⁶⁷ The Syrian Protestant College provided instruction in the Arabic language, in order to be closer to the local Arab culture and avoid “Frankifying the natives for imperialist purposes.” Stephen B. Penrose. *That They May Have Life, the Story of the American University of Beirut 1866* (Beirut: American Press, 1941) 6.

⁶⁸ Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 252-253.

the student body, the language of instruction was changed to English in 1876.⁶⁹ This fact had clear repercussions on the secular Arabic book production of the press.

The secular publications were classified in the American Press catalogs as 'educational and scientific works', 'poetical', 'historical', and 'controversial' works.⁷⁰ These scientific books on chemistry, anatomy, and natural history were greatly helped by books on similar topics that were printed at the Egyptian Būlāq press and that were already in circulation in Syria since the 1830s.⁷¹ "Of the native authors whose books it printed, mention may be made of al-Šayḥ Yūsuf al-Asīr al-Azharī (1815–1889) [*Rā'id al-Farā'id*, on the division of inheritance according to Islamic law], Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir (1840–1913) [*Ṭiqd al-Ağyād fi al-Šāfināt al-Ġiyād*, on pure Arabian horses], Nawfal Nawfal [*Huqūq al-Umam*, on the rights of nations], and Ibrāhīm al-Ḥawrānī (1844–1916) [*Al-Āyāt al-Bayyināt fi Ġarā'ib al-Arḍ wa al-Samawāt*, (*the distinctive verses on the wonders of the earth and the heavens*) on the wonders of nature]. Finally Henry Jessup's (1832–1910) wrote illustrated books for children, two of which are listed [in the American Mission Press catalogues of 1887 (p. 54), and 1896 (p.70): *Arz Lubnān, kitāb bi-ṣuwar lil-awlād* (*Cedars of Lebanon*, folio. *Illustrated Book for Children*. By Rev. Dr. H. H. Jessup. n.d.) and *Zanābiq al-Ḥaql, kitāb bi-ṣuwar lil-'awlād* (*Lilies of the Field. Illustrated Book for Children*. By Rev. Dr. H. H. Jessup. 99 pages. n.d.)]."⁷²

In 1851, the American Press started publishing, as an experiment, a monthly journal in Arabic called *Mağmū' al-Fawāyid* (*A Collection of Benefits*), which is considered the first Arabic magazine printed in Beirut and the Arab East.⁷³ "It was a missionary publication in which religion and preaching played the leading part. The journal was discontinued in 1855."⁷⁴ In 1863, the press published the first illustrated newspaper in Beirut, *Aḥbār 'an Intiṣār al-Inḡīl* (*News about the Spread of the Bible*).⁷⁵ In 1870, the press launched the first Arabic children's newspaper, *Kawkab al-Šubḥ al-Munīr* (*Planet of the Enlightening Morning*), as well as its weekly newsletter, *al-Našra al-Uṣbū'īyya*.⁷⁶ Not all books listed in its catalogues were printed by the American Press itself; some were deposited in the book depot attached to the press by other Bible societies such as the American Bible Society (ABS), The British and Foreign Bible Society (B&FBS), The London Religious Tract

⁶⁹ Op. cit. Penrose, 1941. 4.

⁷⁰ *Catalogue and Price List of Publications of the American Mission Press* (Beirut: 1884)

⁷¹ Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 185.

⁷² Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 252-253. Cf. *American Mission Press catalogue* (Beirut: 1887, 54. 1896) 70.

⁷³ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 55. Cf. Filib di Ṭarrāzī (Philippe de Tarrazi, 28 April 1865 - 7 August 1956) *Tārīḥ al-Šihāfa al-'Arabīyya* (*History of the Arab Press*), Vol. I (Beirut: al-Maṭba'a al-Adabiyya, 1913) 53–54.

⁷⁴ Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 137.

⁷⁵ Ibid. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 55.

⁷⁶ Ibid. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 55.

Society (RTS), The American Tract Society (ATS), and independent presses and individuals such as the Syrian Protestant College and the Khalil Effendi Sarkis' Press.⁷⁷

A glance at its catalogues of 1887 and 1897 confirms that its production and sales of religious literature was by far its largest. Nonetheless, the catalogues list a considerable amount of scientific, literary, lexicographical and philosophical works, two newspapers, and a limited number of illustrated stories. For example, the 1887 catalogue (*Illustrated Catalogue and Price List of Publications of the American Mission Press of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Beirut, Syria*, Beirut, 1887) dedicated its first 10 pages to front matter such as, title pages (in Arabic and English), a brief introduction about the Press and its services, and explanations of abbreviations. This is followed by 4 pages (pp. 9–12) of typespecimen of the American Arabic fonts in different sizes and variations (discussed later in this chapter); followed by 18 pages (pp. 13–31) dedicated to a total of 120 “Educational & Scientific Works, *kutub ‘ilmiyya*”; followed by 63 pages (pp. 32–95) dedicated to a total of 445 religious literature. This latter is divided as follows: 110 “Religious Works, *kutub dīniyya*”, 126 “Tracts and Pamphlets, *karārīs*”, 22 “Works Published at the Expense of the American Tract Society, *ġam‘iyyat al-karārīs al-amīrkāniyya*”, 81 “Works Published at the Expense of the London Religious Tract Society, *ġam‘iyyat al-karārīs al-barīṭāniyya*”, 57 “Scriptures Published by the American Bible Society, *kutub muqaddasa li-ġam‘iyyat al-tawrāt al-amīrkāniyya*” in different sizes, bindings and languages (Arabic, English, French, German, Hebrew, Ancient and Modern Greek, Turkish), 18 “Scriptures of the British and Foreign Bible Society, *ġam‘iyyat al-tawrāt al-barīṭāniyya*”, and 1 (Arabic Gospel of Matthew) “For the Blind, *lil-‘umyān*.”⁷⁸

Ten years later, in its 1897 catalogue we notice not only a different visual design, but also a more structured listing of the books. The first 14 pages remained the same, however, the listing of books started with some of the religious works over 11 pages, followed by 22 pages of secular works, and then the remaining pages switched back to religious texts. Another difference in structure is that the books were organized thematically.

Pages 14–18 list in English the “Scriptures Published by the American Bible Society” and the same list is repeated in Arabic on pages 19–23. All listing thereafter (as in the 1887 catalogue) are bilingual (Arabic and English). The books are then grouped by languages and described: “Arabic” (23 Bibles, 20 New Testaments, 5 Gospels, 5 Psalms, 2 Proverbs, 1 Pentateuch, 2 Genesis), “English” (4 Bibles, 4 New Testaments), “French” (1 Bible, 2 New Testaments), “German” (1 Bible, 2 New Testaments), “Greek (modern)” (1 Bible, 1 New Testament), “Greek (ancient)” (1 New

⁷⁷ *Illustrated Catalogue and Price List of Publications of the American Mission Press of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Beirut, Syria* (Beirut: 1887, 5. 1897) 7.

⁷⁸ These facts have been summarized from examining the catalogues of the American Press of Beirut: *Illustrated Catalogue and Price List of Publications of the American Mission Press of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Beirut, Syria* (Beirut: 1887).

Testament), “Hebrew” (2 Old Testaments, 1 New Testament, 2 Pentateuchs), “Syriac (modern)” (1 Bible, 1 New Testament, 2 Psalms), “Turkish (Armenian alphabet)” (1 Bible, 1 New Testament), and “Italian” (1 Bible, 1 New Testament). This is then followed by the same listing in Arabic, then by two pages of bilingual listing of 18 works of “Scriptures of the British and Foreign Bible Society, *ġam’iyyat al-tawrāt al-barīṭāniyya*,” and one book “For the Blind.”

The listing of secular works follows and occupies 22 pages (pp. 24 1/2–43). Each book is assigned a unique number and the listing is topically arranged. The “Educational and Scientific Works, *kutub ‘ilmiyya wa adabiyya*” are divided into: “Wall Cards, Primers and Readers, *kutub al-qirā’a*” (No. 83–139); *kutub luġawiyya*, on grammar, prosody and rhetoric (No. 140–156), on geography, atlases and maps (No. 157–171); on sciences—mathematics, physics, chemistry, geology, astronomy, botany, logic, anatomy, medicine, and agriculture (No. 172–217); on foreign languages and dictionaries (No. 218–236); and on history (No. 237–256).

The remaining pages 47–127 are listing of religious works including those of their other religious associates (the ABS, B&FBS, RTS, and ATS). The last page (p.128) before the English title page is an additional listing of 29 dictionaries in various languages (Arabic, French and English).⁷⁹

A noticeable fact is the increase of 53 secular titles and 55 religious ones, tipping the balance towards more secular works from 27% secular to 73% religious work in 1887—and to further increase of 34% secular to 66% religious works in 1897. This facts points to the growing popularity of the Press and the wider reach of its client base. I have not come across later catalogues from the American Press nor literature about its production in the first half of the twentieth century, so this leads me to conclude that the Press’ most significant cultural contribution to Arab modernity, specifically through its scientific and educational Arabic publications, was at its most potent level in the transitional moment in Arab cultural history, in the second half of the nineteenth century. The American Press was the first highly productive and independent press (and publisher) in Beirut. Its achievements included printing the first Arabic language Bible, the first Arabic encyclopedia by Buṭrus al-Bustānī, and several religious and scientific works by the professors of the Syrian American College and other Arab intellectuals, in addition to four newspapers.⁸⁰ I discuss here below the American Press’ early influential authors and the publications that helped raise the profile of the Press.

⁷⁹ These facts have been summarized from examining the catalogues of the American Press of Beirut: *Illustrated Catalogue and Price List of Publications of the American Mission Press of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Beirut, Syria* (Beirut: 1897).

⁸⁰ Op. cit. Makariyus, 1883. 465.

1.2.4. Key figures and select publications

There is a direct correlation between the educational work of the American Protestant missionaries and the development of Arab liberal thought and intelligentsia of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A number of the earliest graduates from the Syrian Protestant College became prominent figures in the *nahḍa*, the Arab cultural renaissance of the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century.⁸¹ Their education and the books they read in their college years are some of the factors that contributed to their activist and liberal thinking. For example, Ya'qūb Ṣarrūf (1852–1927. Class of 1870) returned ten years after his graduation to teach Arabic at the Syrian Protestant College. In 1885, he went to Cairo and in collaboration with his friend Fāris Nimr (1856–1951. Class of 1874), they established two pioneer Arab publications: *Al-Muqaṭṭam* and *Al-Muqtaṭaf*. The latter became the leading Arabic scientific magazine that had a seminal influence on Arab liberal thought and cultural rebirth. Ṣarrūf remained its editor until his death in 1927.⁸² In his address at the 1922 centennial celebration of the press, Ya'qūb Ṣarrūf states: “It was my good fortune to gain the rudiments of learning in a small school close by this Press and in books printed by it. Then there passed before my mind’s eye pictures of those books that I read and studied and which was my good fortune to use later on in teaching before my removal to Egypt. Who can write a history of the intellectual and literary awakening which has spread in Arab lands and not attribute to the American Press a large share in it? Who can fail to appreciate what a beneficial influence this House has had upon our language, our intellectual activities and our literature?”⁸³ He continues by listing the influences of the press on those it had trained in the art of printing, that later became founders of other reputed presses such *Maṭba‘at al-Ma‘ārif* (the Press of Knowledge) of Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *al-Maṭba‘a al-Adabiyya* (The Literary Press) of Ḥalīl Sarkīs, and the press of *al-Muqtaṭaf* (*The Digest*); all printing houses and publishers that have contributed to the *Nahḍa*.⁸⁴

The American Press contributed to Arab literary revival and modernity by training and publishing the works of authors and intellectuals such as Nāṣif al-Yāziǧī (1800–1871) and Buṭrus al-Bustānī (1819–1883), among others. In its 128 years of operation, it has assembled in its fold a number of skilled American and Arab managers, printers, translators and editors. In addition to Buṭrus al-Bustānī and Nāṣif al-Yāziǧī, its editors and translators included Yūsuf al-Asīr, Miḥa‘īl

⁸¹ *Al-Nahḍa*, literally meaning the ‘awakening’, is the Arab literary and cultural renaissance of the nineteenth and early twentieth century that aimed at reforming society by reforming the language and adapting Arab sciences and knowledge to modern needs and scientific standards. By means of printed books and journals, it worked on spreading information and ideas to an Arabic-speaking and reading public, about what an Arab modern identity and society could be.

⁸² Op. cit. Penrose, 1941. 21.

⁸³ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 46–47.

⁸⁴ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 46–47.

Mašāqa (1800–1888), Ibrāhīm Sarkīs (1834–1885), who worked as editor and corrector at the American Press until his death, As‘ad al-Šadūdī (1826–1906), and Ibrāhīm Ḥawrānī.⁸⁵ Collectively and at different periods, these authors produced a number of notable publications that consequently influenced Arab publishing and intellectual production.

1.2.4.1. *The Arabic Bible*

As mentioned earlier, Eli Smith’s new Arabic Bible was at the base of the financing and establishment of the American Press. Smith was the founder and editor of the American Press, and his first notable publication project was the translation of the Bible into Arabic. Dr. Eli Smith (Northford, CT 1801 – Beirut, 1857), was an American Protestant missionary who graduated from Yale University (1821) and from Andover Theological Seminary in Massachusetts (1826). He arrived in Malta on the 14th of July 1826 (aged 25) and worked there until 1829. Went first to Cairo to learn the Arabic language⁸⁶ and then traveled through Armenia, Georgia and Persia. He came to Beirut in 1833, and remained until his death on 11 January 1857.⁸⁷ In 1848, he began his work on the translation with the assistance of two native Arab scholars, Buṭrus al-Bustānī and Nāṣif al-Yāziḡī. Al-Bustānī was well versed in Hebrew and so he set about making the translation of the Old Testament directly from the original Hebrew text. Nāṣif al-Yāziḡī was a well-known grammarian who taught the Arabic language at the Protestant College, and whose responsibility at the Press included editing and correcting the Arabic translation. With this team of three, the new translation of Genesis was completed in 1850, and 100 copies were printed. In March 1854, the Pentateuch and parts of the New Testament were completed. After approval by the Mission, the American Press began printing the new translation of the Bible in June 1854. In the three years preceding his death in 1857, Dr. Eli Smith had managed to translate 12 books of the Old Testament and the entire New Testament. His second notable achievement was the overseeing of the production of the American Arabic font known as *al-Amrīkānī* (discussed in detail further down).

After his death he was succeeded by Dr. Cornelius Van Alen Van Dyck M.D. (Kinderhook, NY 1818 – Beirut, 1895), an American missionary of Dutch descent, a scientist and educator, who graduated as medical doctor from the Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia (1839). Van Dyck was

⁸⁵ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923: 39.

⁸⁶ *The Missionary Herald* of 1827 wrote: “In order that Mr. Smith might be qualified to superintend the press in Arabic, it was determined that he proceed to Cairo, and study the Arabic language ... Having remained at Cairo until the commencement of summer, Mr. Smith is expected to proceed to Beyrut, and remain there for a season, By the time he shall have returned to Malta, a found of Arabic types will be procured, and works in that language will be commenced under his superintendence.” Quoted in Kamal S. Salibi., Yusuf K. Khouri, eds, *The Missionary Herald. Reports from Ottoman Syria, 1819–1870*, vol. I (Amman: Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies, 1995), 437.

⁸⁷ James B. Pritchard, *Archeology and the Old Testament* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958) 57–58.

the son of a New York country doctor, Dr. Henry L. Van Dyck and his wife Catherine van Alen. He was sent to Syria in 1840 by The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) as a medical missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church.⁸⁸ He served until his death in 1895 in Beirut.⁸⁹ He first taught at the mission school of 'Abbāy (in Mount Lebanon) and then moved to Beirut in 1857 where he became professor of medicine in the medical school of the newly founded Syrian Protestant College. He taught astronomy and directed the SPC's observatory and meteorological station.⁹⁰ He also managed the American Press and edited its weekly journal *al-Nashra al-'Usbū'īyya* (first printed in 1866).⁹¹ His mastery of the Arabic language was legendary; he developed an economical and precise prose style that modernised scientific Arabic writing.⁹²

Dr. Cornelius Van Dyck gave the American Press a strong impetus for perfecting the quality of the printed books.⁹³ He was 29 years old when he was appointed to carry on the work on the Arabic Bible. He worked in collaboration with the renowned Muslim scholar al-Šayḥ Yūsuf al-Asīr on perfecting the language.⁹⁴ Van Dyck gave the translation of the New Testament prepared by Dr. Smith a thorough revision conforming the Arabic more closely to the Greek Textus Receptus (the Greek New Testament texts that formed the basis for the translation of the German Luther Bible, and other European translations). Together with al-Asīr, they devised a style that was “pure, exact, clear and classical, the design being to make the Bible intelligible to common people, and at the same time acceptable to Arabic scholars.”⁹⁵ According to an inscription in the handwriting of Dr. Van Dyck in the first edition of the new Arabic Bible, “the actual translation of the New Testament was completed in August 22, 1864 in 'Abayy, the last type was set up March 10, 1865,

⁸⁸ Op. cit. Penrose, 1941. 36

⁸⁹ “Biographical Index of Missionaries – To Middle East,” *Presbyterian Heritage Center*, 2011. <http://www.phcmontreat.org/bios/Bios-Missionaries-MiddleEast.htm> (Last consulted 28 January 2015).

⁹⁰ Op. cit. Penrose, 1941. 36–37.

⁹¹ Ibid. Penrose, 1941. 37.

⁹² Information and facts were summarized from the book: *Hayat Kurnilius Fan Dik (The life of Cornelius Van Dyck)* printed in B'abda, Lebanon at al-Maṭba'a al-'Uṭmāniyya (the Ottoman Press) in 1900. “This book offers an overview of Van Dyck's career, followed by commemorative essays and poems by friends, students, and colleagues, many of which were read at Van Dyck's golden jubilee in the Levant in 1890. The list of presenters includes some of the most prominent names in Arab culture of the nineteenth century. Illustrations include a photographic portrait as frontispiece, a bust in the garden of Saint George Orthodox Hospital where Van Dyck was chief physician, and a photograph of his gravestone. There is a ten-page annotated bibliography of his works.”

⁹³ Nasrallah, 51.

⁹⁴ Auji, 165–167: “Bustānī further distanced himself from the mission and blazed his own trail. [...] Similarly, while he remained exclusively employed within the realm of the Press, Yāziḡī's relationship with the mission took a hit after Smith's passing (particularly since, of all the American missionaries, Smith was likely his greatest supporter and advocate). Having maintained his allegiance to the Greek Orthodox Church, Yāziḡī did little to endear himself to the other missionaries, least of all Cornelius Van Dyck, the new Press Editor. As such, when Van Dyck refused to work with both Yāziḡī and Bustānī on the Bible translation (opting to hire his own translator, Yūsuf al-Aṣīr)...” Cf. E. Smith and C.V.A. Van Dyck, *A Brief Documentary History of the Translation of the Scriptures in the Arabic Language* (Beirut: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1900) 25, 29.

⁹⁵ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 6.

and the last sheet of the first completed Bible came off the press on March 29, 1865.⁹⁶ In 1865, Dr. Van Dyck went to New York to supervise electrotyping the plates of the entire Arabic Bible. He was accompanied by Mr. Samuel Hallock (1837–1917) who supervised the electrotyping of seven other editions of the Bible: voweled, plain, with references, without references, large, medium and small sizes.⁹⁷ Mr. Hallock returned with Van Dyck to Beirut in 1867 to take up his position as printing superintendent. For the thirty years that followed until his death in 1895, Van Dyck made many revisions and corrections to the subsequent editions of the Arabic Bible. The Bibles of the American Press and its religious books were exported by the tens of thousands all over the Arabic-speaking world.⁹⁸

1.2.4.2. Secular scientific and educational publications

Besides editing and directing the press, Cornelius Van Alen Van Dyck wrote and published twenty-five scientific works on topics that varied from medicine, geography, astronomy, algebra, geometry, and prosody.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Franklin E. Hoskin, "A completed Chapter in Bible History," *Al-Kitāb al-Muqaddas al-'Arabī* (1915) 2.

⁹⁷ Ibid. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 6.

⁹⁸ Op. cit. *Centennial of the American Press*, 1923. 6.

⁹⁹ Cornelius Van Dycks' list of books. Cf. *Hayat Kurnilius Fan Dik*, 170–177, and the *American Press Catalogue*, 1887.

1) Published by The American Press:

—*Al-Mir'āt al-Waḍiyya fī al-Kura al-Ardīyya* (*The Bright Mirror of the Terrestrial Globe*. AP Catalog transl.: *Large Geography*. 1853, 1886, 1891. 502 pp.)

—*Al-Nafā'is li-Talāmīd al-Madāris* (*Valuables for Students*. AP Catalog transl.: *Advanced reading books*. 274 pp.)

—*Kitāb al-Rawḍa al-Zahrīyya fī al-Uṣūl al-Ġabriyya* (*The Book of the Flowering Garden on the Principles of Algebra*. AP Catalog transl.: *Algebra*. 1853, 1877. 264 pp.)

—*Iqlīdis* (AP Catalog transl.: *Euclid's Geometry*. 4 Books. Translated by C.V.A. Van Dyck. 1857–1889. 125 pp.)

—*Kitāb fī al-Uṣūl al-Handasiyya* (AP Catalog transl.: *Geometry Principles*. 1857, 1889. 312 pp.)

—*Kitāb fī Uṣūl 'Ilm al-Hay'a (al-falak)* (AP Catalog transl.: *On Higher Astronomy*. "With hundreds of illustrations." 1874. 288 pp.)

—*Kitāb Irwā' al-Zamā' min Maḥāsin al-Qibba al-Zarqā'* (*The Book of Curing the Thirst from the Beauties of the Blue Dome*. AP Catalog transl.: *Beauties of the Starry Heavens*. "The second volume of the book on Higher Astronomy." 1888, 1893. 239 pp.)

—*Muḥīṭ al-Dā'ira fī 'Ilm al-'Urūd wa al-Qāfiya* (*The Circle's Circumference on the Sciences of Prosody and Rhyme*. AP Catalog transl.: *Dr Van Dyck's Prosody*. 1857. 123 pp.)

—*Uṣūl Al-Bāṭilūḡiyya al-Dāhiliyya* (*'Ayy Mabādī' al-Ṭibb al-Baṣarī al-Nazarī wa al-'Ilmi*. AP Catalog transl.: *Internal Pathology*. 1878. 1048 pp.)

—*Al-Naṣra al-'Usbū'iyya* (*The Weekly Newsletter*. First issue in 1866).

2) Printed on the account of the Syrian Protestant College:

—*Uṣūl Al-Taṣḥiṣ al-Ṭabī'ī* (AP Catalog transl.: *Physical Diagnosis*. 1874. 128 pp.)

—*Risālat al-Rāzi fī al-Ġidri wa al-Ḥaṣba* (AP Catalog transl.: *A Treatise on Small Pox and Measles*. Edited by C.V.A. Van Dyck. 1872. 112 pp.)

3) Published by al-Maṭba'a al-Adabiyya of Ḥalil Sarkis:

—*al-Naqṣ fī al-Ḥaḡar* (AP Catalog transl.: *Engraving on Stone*. A series of 8 volumes of science primers)

Vol. I: *Fi Mabādī' 'Ammā* (AP Catalog transl.: *General Principles*. 1886. 128 pp.)

Vol. II: *Fi Mabādī' al-Kīmiya* (AP Catalog transl.: *Elementary Chemistry*. 1886. 142 pp.)

Vol. III: *Fi Mabādī' al-Ṭabī'yyāt* (AP Catalog transl.: *Elementary Physics*. 1886. p. 136 pp.)

Vol. IV: *Fi Mabādī' al-Ġuḡrāfiya al-Ṭabī'yya* (AP Catalog transl.: *First Lessons in Physical Geography*. 1887. 103 pp.)

Vol. V: *Fi Mabādī' al-Ġiyulūḡiyya* (AP Catalog transl.: *First Lessons in Geology*. 1887. 123 pp.)

Vol. VI: *Fi Mabādī' 'Ilm al-Hay'a* (AP Catalog transl.: *Elementary Astronomy*. 1888. 122 pp.)

Vol. VII: *Fi Mabādī' 'Ilm al-Nabāt* (AP Catalog transl.: *Elementary Botany*. 1888. 132 pp.)

Vol. VIII: *Fi Mabādī' Uṣūl al-Manṭiq* (AP Catalog transl.: *First Principles of Logic*. 1888. 112 pp.)

—*Uṣūl al-Kīmiya* (AP Catalog transl.: *Chemistry*. "With 158 diagrammatic illustrations." by C.V.A. Van Dyck. 412 pp.)

—*Kitāb fī al-Luḡuriḡmāt wa al-Ansāb, wa fī Masāhat al-Mutallāṭ al-Mustawiyya wa al-Kurawīyya wa Masāhat al-Suṭūḥ wa al-Aḡsām wa al-Arāḍi wa silk al-Abḥur...* (AP Catalog transl.: *Logarithms, Trigonometry, &c...* "With 122 diagrammatic illustrations and 19 tables." 1873. 508pp.)

Two other prominent (Arab) scholars, associated with the American Press, were the pioneers of the *Nahḍa*, Nāṣif al-Yāziḡī and Buṭrus al-Bustānī. They not only worked at the American Press with Eli Smith, but also published and printed their early works there.

Nāṣif al-Yāziḡī (Kfar Šīma, Mount Lebanon, 1800 – Beirut, 1871) was a linguist, writer and poet, credited with the rediscovering of the Arab literary heritage. “He had a deep love for the Arabic language and a deep appreciation for the beauty of classical Arabic literature. He was also a purist in that he sought to eliminate “corruptions” that through the centuries had been absorbed into language and to return to the practices of the classical scholars.”¹⁰⁰ Until 1840 he was employed in the service of the Lebanese Emīr Bašīr Šihāb II. Following his relocation to Beirut in 1840, he became a tutor to the British and American Protestant missionaries, eventually becoming a professor at the Syrian Protestant College.¹⁰¹ He later became one of the celebrated luminaries of the *Nahḍa*. “Al-Yāziḡī’s grammar was, at 168 pages, the first substantial book produced at the American Press (in the period between 1822-1841), apart from Psalters, and remained its weightiest.”¹⁰² In 1847, and in collaboration with Buṭrus al-Bustānī, Miḡa’l Mišāqa, Eli Smith, Cornelius Van Alen Van Dyck, al-Yāziḡī formed *al-Ġam’iyya al-Sūriyya li-Iktisāb al-‘Ulūm wa al-Funūn* (the Syrian Association for the Sciences and Arts). The circle tackled and published its deliberations on themes such as women’s rights, history, politics, and advocated scientific knowledge aiming to abolish ignorance and superstition.¹⁰³ Dissolved in 1852, it was reestablished a few years later as *al-Ġam’iyya al-Sūriyya lil-‘Ulūm* (the Syrian Scientific Association), and became a larger multi-sectarian society of intellectuals who pushed for Arab independence from the Ottomans. In 1863, he became the principle teacher of Arabic at al-Bustānī’s secular National School, al-Madrassa al-Waṭaniyya.¹⁰⁴ He wrote on poetry, rhetoric, grammar and philosophy. His book on the Arabic language and grammar, printed and sold at the American Press, *Maḡma’ al-Baḡrayn* (*The Meeting of the Two Seas*. AP Catalog transl.: *Assemblies of Sheikh Nauseef el Yaziji*.

¹⁰⁰ “Nasif Yaziji” *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2015. January 28, 2015. Web. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/652327/Nasif-Yaziji>.

¹⁰¹ P. C. Sadgrove “Al-Yāziḡī, Nāṣif (1800-71),” Julie Scott Meisami, Paul Starkey Eds. *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, Volume 2 (London: Routledge, 1998) 813.

¹⁰² Op. cit. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 58.

¹⁰³ *A’māl al-Ġam’iyya al-Sūriyya* (A collection of eighteen lectures given at *al-Ġam’iyya al-Sūriyya li-Iktisāb al-‘Ulūm wa al-Funūn*, selected, compiled and printed by Buṭrus al-Bustānī. 1852)

¹⁰⁴ “Nasif Yaziji.” *Al-Hakawti*. <http://al-hakawati.net/english/Arabpers/nasif-al-yaziji.asp> Last consulted 28 January 2015. For other sources on Al-Yāziḡī’s life and works, see Salīm Effendi Diyāb in *Al-Jinān* (1871): 150–157, Fu’ād Ifrām al-Bustānī in *al-Mašriq* (1928): 834-843, 923-939, Ignaz Kratschkowsky in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 4 (1934: 1160–1171). Gully, A.J. “al-Yāziḡī.” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2016. Reference. Last consulted: 01 June 2016. Web. <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2048/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-yazidji-SIM_8007> First appeared online: 2012. First Print Edition: 1960-2007.

A collection of sixty *maqāmāt* “explained by al-Yāziǧī on the Arabic language and literature, containing rules and examples and various histories...” 1856. 436 pp.), is considered his pioneering work for its attempt to link the traditional style of al-Ḥarīrī with contemporary concerns. He also published several other titles with the American Press throughout his life.¹⁰⁵

Butrus al-Bustānī (al-Dibbiyya, Mount Lebanon 1819 – Beirut, 1883) was a product of an Arab-Ottoman world under transformation and a pioneer of the Arab *Nahḍa*. He embodied the change in society that resulted from the encounter with American missionaries, the openness to Western ideals, and the striving for an Arab modernity. His scholarly work on a ‘modern’ Arabic dictionary and the first six volumes of the first modern Arabic encyclopedia played an important role in revitalizing the Arabic language and culture in the late nineteenth century.¹⁰⁶ He was originally a Maronite Christian, educated at ‘Ayn Warqa seminary (originally training to become a priest), came to Beirut looking for work, and ended up employed as a teacher by the American missionaries. He later converted to Protestantism, and following the 1860s sectarian civil war in Mount Lebanon, he adopted ecumenical humanist views and preached secular liberal thinking. “He explicitly called for, and worked toward, a new form of coexistence based on equality, one that was derived from an embrace of the region’s religious diversity,”¹⁰⁷ as clearly expressed in his 130-page memorial to As‘ad al-Šidyāq, entitled *Qiṣṣat As‘ad Šidyāq* (*The Story of As‘ad Šidyāq*) published in 1860.¹⁰⁸ He remained until his death in 1883 a leading member of the Protestant community, a defender of individual freedom, and a fighter against the divisive sectarian political representation in his country Lebanon.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Nāṣif al-Yāziǧī’s books on Arabic language and grammar, printed or sold at the American Press include:

—*Maǧma‘ al-Baḥrayn* (*The Meeting of the Two Seas*. AP Catalog transl.: *Assemblies of Sheikh Nauseef el Yazijy*. A collection of sixty *maqāmāt* “explained by al-Yāziǧī on the Arabic language and literature, containing rules and examples and various histories...” 1856. 436 pp.)

—*Tālīt al-Qamarayn* (AP Catalog transl.: *Poetry of Sheikh Nauseef el Yazijy*. 146 pp.)

—*Al-‘Urf al-Ṭayyib fi Šarḥ Dīwān Abi al-Ṭayyib* (AP Catalog transl.: *Poetry of El Mutanebbby*. “An explanation by al-Yāziǧī and his son al-Šayḥ Ibrāhīm al-Yāziǧī of Dīwān al-Mutanabbī, including excerpts of al-Mutanabbī’s most renowned poems.” 713 pp.)

—*Maṭālī‘ al-Sa’d li-Maṭālī‘ al-Ġawhar al-Fard, Muḥtaṣar fi al-Šarf wa al-Naḥu* (AP Catalog transl.: *Yazijy’s Arabic Conjugation*. 65pp.)

—*Al-Ġumāna fi Šarf al-Ḥizāna, Arǧūzat Šarf* (AP Catalog transl.: *Yazijy’s Higher Etymology*. 113 pp.)

—*Muḥtaṣar Nār al-Qura fi Šarḥ Ġawf al-Fara, Arǧūza Muṭawwala fi ‘Ilm al-Naḥu* (AP Catalog transl.: *Yazijy’s Higher Grammar*. 317 pp.)

—*‘Uqūd al-Durar fi Šarḥ Šawāhid al-Muḥtaṣar* (AP Catalog transl.: *Notes on Yazijy’s Higher Grammar*. 162 pp.)

—*Maǧmū‘ al-Adab fi Funūn al-Arab, Maǧmū‘a fi al-Ma‘ānī wa al-Bayān wa al-Badī‘ wa al-‘Urūd* (AP Catalog transl.: *Yazijy’s Rhetoric*. 216 pp. First published in 1855 in two parts: *‘Iqd al-Ġumān* on Rhetoric and *Nuqtat al-Dā‘ira* on Prosody)

—*Al-Ṭirāz al-Mu‘allim, Arǧūza Muḥtaṣara fi ‘Ilm al-Bayān* (AP Catalog transl.: *Yazijy’s Elementary Rhetoric*. 36 pp.)

—*Al-Lāmi‘a fi Šarḥ al-Ġāmi‘a fi al-‘Urūd* (AP Catalog transl.: *Yazijy’s Prosody*)

—*Qaṭb al-Šinā‘a fi al-Mantiq* (AP Catalog transl.: *Yazijy’s Epitome of Logic*. 1857. 48 pp.)

From other private publishers/printing presses:

—*Faṣl al-Ḥiṭāb fi Uṣūl Luǧat al-I‘rāb* (first published in 1854. On Arabic grammar)

—*Dīwān al-Šayḥ Nāṣif Nāṣif al-Yāziǧī* (Poetry of al-Yāziǧī. 1859)

¹⁰⁶ “Butrus al-Bustānī” *Encyclopædia Britannica*. <http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/86362/Butrus-al-Bustani>. Last Updated 12-1-2013.

¹⁰⁷ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 13-14.

¹⁰⁸ Op. cit. Butrus al-Bustānī, *Qiṣṣat As‘ad al-Šidyāq* (Beirut: 1860).

¹⁰⁹ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 182.

Next to teaching, Buṭrus al-Bustānī along with Nāṣīf al-Yāziǧī started working at the American Press in Beirut as correctors (*muṣaḥḥihīn*).¹¹⁰ Al-Bustānī transferred from the “Abayy Seminary to Beirut in order to assist Eli Smith in the Arabic translation of the book of Genesis, in the autumn of 1848.¹¹¹ He worked with Smith until the latter’s death in January 1857, after which he began working independently from the Mission.¹¹² Between 1846-1847, al-Bustānī worked intensively with Van Dyck, who like Eli Smith, had mastered the Arabic language. Van Dyck also shared with al-Bustānī an enthusiasm for and belief in the importance of scientific learning.¹¹³ They both became founding members of an organization that was independent from the American Mission, called *al-Ġamʿiyya al-Sūriyya li-Iktisāb al-ʿUlūm wa al-Funūn* (The Syrian Society for the Acquisition of Sciences and Arts),¹¹⁴ which was founded in Beirut in 1847. Composed mostly of Arab members, but with American presidents, this society met bimonthly until 1852. Meetings were held to discuss topics related to the arts and sciences, consciously avoiding religious topics. “Its constitution reflected the signs of the times: it affirmed new secular spaces in Beirut where American and Arab men of different backgrounds could meet.”¹¹⁵ Buṭrus al-Bustānī promoted the idea of a “dialogue within and across cultures,”¹¹⁶ basing his views on his personal experience with the American Protestant missionaries and the horizons it had opened for him. He was convinced “that the encounter with the foreign and unfamiliar through physical or mental exploration was essential for an Arab *re-acquisition* of knowledge and science.”¹¹⁷ Like Asʿad al-Šidyāq (the first Arab convert to Protestantism) and his brother Fāris al-Šidyāq,¹¹⁸

¹¹⁰ Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 91-99.

¹¹¹ Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 122-123.

¹¹² Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 141.

¹¹³ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 194.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Fruma Zachs, *The Making of a Syrian Identity. Intellectuals and Merchants in Nineteenth Century Beirut*. Social, Economic and Political Studies of the Middle East and Asia. Series. Vol. 98 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005) 138,139. Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 181.

¹¹⁵ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 194.

¹¹⁶ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 112.

¹¹⁷ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 213.

¹¹⁸ (Ahmad) Fāris al-Šidyāq (ʿAṣqūt, Lebanon 1804 – Kadikoy, Turkey 1887) He was a linguist, a writer, a translator, a critic, a scholar, an editor and printer. He is considered the pioneer of Arab journalism and one of the “founding fathers of modern Arabic language and literature.” [Trābulṣī, Fawwāz, ʿAzīz al-ʿAẓma, *Silsilat al-ʿAṣāl al-Maǧhūla, Aḥmad Fāris al-Šidyāq (The Unknown works of Ahmad Fāris Al-Šidyāq)* (Beirut: Riad El Rayyes Books, 1995) 8]. He was educated at the ʿAyn Warqa school, “one of the most prestigious Maronite schools of the nineteenth Century.” He is credited with inventing Arabic terminology for numerous objects and professions that were a part of modern life but had up until the nineteenth century not been assigned appropriate Arabic words. [Radwa ʿĀšūr, *Al-Ḥadāṭa al-Mumkina (The Possible Modernity)* (Cairo: Dār al-Šurūq, 2009, 2012) 11]. Under the influence of his brother Asʿad and his schooling which fostered individualism, Fāris al-Šidyāq’s liberal thinking was translated into an open interest in Western culture, and the need to translate liberal ideas into a new visual language and design of the printed Arabic book. He became a reformist of note with a direct involvement in printing and independent publishing. Cf. Geoffrey Roper (1988). “*Arabic Printing in Malta 1825–1845. Its History and its Place in the development of Print Culture in the Arab Middle East*” (PhD Thesis, unpublished), Durham: University of Durham, 1988.

Buṭrus al-Bustānī was “willing to borrow from foreign cultures and to rethink the basis of his own.”¹¹⁹

“In 1852, the Society’s final year of activities, Buṭrus al-Bustānī selected eighteen of the many lectures that had been given at the society’s meetings and published them as a book, called *A’māl al-Ġam’iyya al-Sūriyya*. The collection contains all the elements that make up the missionaries’ concept of “Syria,” i.e. the country itself as a territorial unit, its history and culture, and of course the predominance of Arabic. Some of these elements would also later constitute the parameters of the local intellectuals’ Syrian patriotism.”¹²⁰

The lectures he selected reflected his own interests and highlighted the recurring call in this collection for the revival of the Arabic language and Arab culture, for going back to pre-Islamic sciences and literature, and for attempting to restructure the past for contemporary purposes. In his *Ḥuṭba fi Adab al-Arab* (*A Lecture on the Culture of the Arabs*) presented at *al-Ġam’iyya al-Sūriyya* on the 15th of February 1859,¹²¹ and towards the end of his speech, he calls upon his countrymen to arise and resurrect their culture. Below a text that was published by al-Bustānī a year later in 1860 based on that lecture:

“Oh sons of the nation (*ya abnā’ al-waṭan*)! The pinnacle of those of excellence, and the grandchildren of fellow Syrians and proud Greeks! The camel’s hump of this nineteenth century is that it is the century of knowledge and light (*ġil al-ma’rifā wa al-nūr*). It is the century of inventions and discoveries, the century of culture and humanist knowledge (*ġil al-adab wa al-ma’ārif*), and the century of industry and arts. Arise! Be alert! Awaken! Roll up the sleeves of determination. Culture, waiting at your gates, knocks asking entrance to your beautiful lofty mountains, valleys, plains, and deserts with which nature has adorned your country in all of its glorious beauty. Throw out your fanaticism, your partisanship, and your psychological prejudices [purposes]¹²² (*aġrādukum al-naḥsāniyya*). Offer one hand to the study of culture. Open the doors to this old box that has come back to you after a long absence. Welcome this treasure and meet it in all happiness and joy so that your country is filled with comfort and leisure, and so that you can dress it in splendor and pride. Undoubtedly, the continual progress of this country in the last few years strengthens the resolution of all those who have the desire and zeal (*ġir’a*) for awakening the Arab race from its fallen state. The toils that they undergo and the long years spent by both sons of the nation and foreigners in introducing culture and civilization to the Arabs will be crowned with success.”¹²³

¹¹⁹ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 213.

¹²⁰ Op. cit. Zachs, 2005. 139.

¹²¹ Stephen Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity* (Florida: University Press of Florida, 2004), 19.

¹²² *aġrādukum* literally translates as ‘your purposes’ or ‘your intentions.’

¹²³ Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *A’māl al-Ġam’iyya al-Sūriyya*, (Beirut: 1852), 113-117. Translation from Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, 2004. 44.

Like his fellow members of the *Nahḍa* movement, Al-Bustānī was convinced of promoting the national Arabic language as the best vehicle for communicating European technical and social progress to his countrymen (and women).¹²⁴ This lecture reflected a general interest in the Arabic language and a national Arab identity. It was conceived as marking the beginning of the *Nahḍa*.¹²⁵

Al-Bustānī was referred to as *al-mu'allim* (the teacher), and reform for him was equated with the reform of the educational system. He saw in education a means of 'saving his countrymen from ignorance' and for building a modern nation and society. He was a strong advocate of liberal and secular education which he believed to be the way forward towards national (and non-sectarian) unity. He believed that the proper education of women was quintessential to the development of knowledge and ultimately to the liberation of men and society at large, a point of view he presented in 1850 at a lecture he gave at *al-Ġam'iyya al-Sūriyya*, entitled *Ḥuṭba fī Ta'līm al-Nisā'* (lecture on the education of women).¹²⁶ In 1863 he established the first secular school in the Ottoman Empire, al-Madrasa al-Waṭaniyya (The National School) that emphasized the development of native agency and modern Arab knowledge. In his newspaper *Al-Ġinān* (Vol. 4 1873, p.62), Al-Bustānī describes his educational ideals through his description of the school's principles. He states his belief in secularism, equality, freedom, and the teaching of a curriculum that meets the needs of the nation— and his school's motto "*ḥubb al-waṭan min al-īmān*" (roughly translates as "the love of the homeland is [an article] of faith"), underlines this nationalism. He clearly states that:

"the school is not denominational, but national and secular and open to students of different religions without discrimination [...] The school recruits teachers from the most qualified regardless of their religion or nationality [...] Within the school, everyone is equal (students, teachers, and director of the school and his family), they eat the same food together at the same table [...] The subjects taught at the school meet the needs of the nation and the 'spirit of the age' [...] The school operates on universal principles, teaches any known language if requested by more than six students, but pays special attention to the Arabic language since it is the language of the country [...]."¹²⁷

Buṭrus al-Bustānī was an industrious and idealist writer and teacher. His interest in education and the sciences led him to publish on a number of topics. Before establishing his own

¹²⁴ Published in Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *A'māl al-Ġam'iyya al-Sūriyya*, (Beirut: 1852)

¹²⁵ Op. cit. Zachs, 2005. 146.

¹²⁶ Op. cit. Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *A'māl al-Ġam'iyya al-Sūriyya*, (Beirut: 1852), 27-40.

¹²⁷ Buṭrus Al-Bustānī. Report on his National School in *Al-Ġinān* (Vol. 4. Beirut: 1873) 62. Cf. Khalil Abou Rjaili, "Boutros Al-Boustani (1819-83)" *Prospects: the quarterly review of comparative education*, Vol. XXIII, no. 1/2 (Paris, UNESCO: International Bureau of Education, 1993) 125-133. Cf. Salibi and Khoury, *The Missionary Herald*, Vol. 5, p. 91.

printing press, he printed his books at the American Press.¹²⁸ In 1860 and following the sectarian war in Lebanon, he established, wrote and printed, his *Nafīr Sūriya* (*The Syrian Clarions*, 1860–1861) which consisted of a total of eleven broadsheets, that appeared sporadically from 29 September 1860 until 22 April 1861. In these he voices his patriotic advice to his fellow compatriots, calling for peace and social reform. These broadsheets differed in length (and format) to accommodate the length of the text—the last issue eleven was the longest. However they maintained a consistency in style with each opening with the address: *Ya abnā' al-waṭan* (Oh sons of our nation!), and ending with Bustānī signing off as *min muḥibb lil-waṭan* (from a lover of the nation).¹²⁹ They were text-heavy with only thin ornamental borders that framed the title of the broadsheet (including issue number, place and date of publication)—and from issue 3 onwards, an additional border was used to frame the text including within the title-box (the masthead) and flanking it two small identical woodcut illustrations of a plant. The layout is formal and symmetrical, and the text is set in the American Arabic font using a slightly larger font size for the masthead than the small text size used for the main text block.¹³⁰

In 1867, Buṭrus al-Bustānī with Ḥalīl Sarkīs (1852–1915), established Maṭba'at al-Ma'ārif and operated it jointly till 1873, when Sarkīs left to found his own printing press, al-Maṭba'a al-Adabiyya. In 1876, Buṭrus al-Bustānī began writing his *opus magnus*, the first encyclopedia in the Arabic language entitled *Dā'irat Al-Ma'ārif wa-huwa Qāmūs Āmm li-kulli Fann wa-Maṭlab*, in which he “tried to adapt encyclopedic knowledge to modern needs and standards of information.”¹³¹ In his introduction to this encyclopedia he explicitly states that this book is concerned with secular

¹²⁸ Buṭrus al-Bustānī's books include:

— *Kitāb Rawḍat al-Taḥfīr fī Mask al-Dafātīr* (On bookkeeping, 1851)

— *Kitāb Miṣbāḥ al-Ṭalīb fī Baḥṭ al-Maṭālib, Muṭawwal fī al-Ṣarf wa al-Naḥw wa 'Ilm al-'Urūḍ wa al-Qawāfi* (On Arabic grammar, 1854, 425 pp.)

— *Kitāb Aḥbār al-A'yān fī Ġabal Lubnān* (By Ṭannūs al-Šidyāq. Edited in three part by Buṭrus al-Bustānī, 1859), *Ḥuṭba fī Ādāb al-Luġa al-'Arabiyya* (1859)

— *Qisṣat As'ad al-Šidyāq* (1860), *Kitāba ila al-Nisā' fī Bilād al-Šarq* (1860)

— *Divān al-Mutanabbī* (Edited by Buṭrus al-Bustānī, 1860)

— *Riḥlat Rūbiṣun Kurūzī* (or *Kitāb al-Tuḥfa al-Bustānīyya fī al-Asfār al-Kurūzīyya. Al-qism al-awwal wa al-ṭānī ma'an*. AP Catalog transl.: *Robinson Crusoe Part I. & II.* (1861). “Translated by Mr. Butrus Bistany and his son Mr. Selim Bistany”)

— *Miftāḥ al-Miṣbāḥ* (AP Catalog transl.: *Key to Arabic Grammar*. “By Mr. Butrus Bistany. New Edition”)

— *Kaṣf al-Ḥiṣāb Muṭawwal fī al-Ḥisāb* (AP Catalog transl.: *Bistany's Large Arithmetic*. 1859, 414 pp.)

— *Muḥiṭ al-Muḥiṭ* (AP Catalog transl.: *Mr. Butrus Bistany's Arabic Dictionary, Abridged*. 2 Vols. 2452 pp.) Printed at Maṭba'at al-Ma'ārif, in 1870. which was the first modern Arabic dictionary compiled and organized in alphabetical order.¹³⁰ It was the precursor for al-Bustānī's later and more ambitious Arabic encyclopedia, *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif* (1876–1900).

— *Qaṭr al-Muḥiṭ, Qāmūs 'Arabī Muḥtaṣar* (AP Catalog transl.: *Mr. Butrus Bistany's Arabic Dictionary*. “In 2 Vols. 1859, 2308 pp., containing all the words found in Qāmūs al-Firuzabādi, with additions from Authors and modern usage”).

¹²⁹ Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Nafīr Sūriya* (Beirut, 1860–1861). For more analysis of the content of *Nafīr Sūriya* see Stephen Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, 2004, 47–68.

¹³⁰ Consulted copies from the collection of the Jaffet Library, American University of Beirut, Lebanon. *Nafīr Sūriya*: 1 (Beirut, 29 September 1860), NS: 2 (Beirut, 8 October 1860), NS: 3 (Beirut, 15 October 1860), NS: 4 (Beirut, 25 October 1860), NS: 5 (Beirut, 1 November 1860), NS: 6 (Beirut, 8 November 1860), NS: 7 (Beirut, 19 November 1860), NS: 8 (Beirut, 14 December 1860), NS: 11 (Beirut, 22 April 1861).

¹³¹ Op. cit. Dagmar Glass, “Reorganizing and Disseminating Knowledge during the *Nahḍa*. 2009, 101.

knowledge and lists the particular topics that he intends to cover in his entries; namely, social sciences (*‘ilm al-ahliyya*) and philosophy (*falsafa*); civil and political sciences such as jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and natural, civil, and commercial laws (*al-ḥuqūq al-ṭabī‘iyya*, *‘umūmiyya*, *tiğāriyya*, and *qānūniyya*); “historical knowledge” (*al-‘ulūm al-tārīḥiyya*) of geography, ancient, modern, and church history, as well as archaeology and Greek mythology; the “educational sciences” of algebra, engineering, accounting; mechanical and chemical sciences, particularly astronomy (*al-fulk*) and chemistry; the natural sciences of botany, geology, animal and human physiology, and medicine; and the classical disciplines of languages, poetry, composition, and rhetoric as well as literary history. He also lists technical and artistic skills (*fann-wa ṣinā’a*) such as architecture, inventions, medicine, music, painting, commerce, mining, and printing. He believed that a modern Arabic encyclopedia, like the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*,¹³² is a needed tool of enlightenment.¹³³ Dagmar Glass states that al-Bustānī in his article *Insiklūbīdiya* (encyclopedia), in *Dā’irat Al-Ma’ārif* (Vol.6, 500-5), gives “evidence of his being well aware of the great tradition of Arabic encyclopedism, which he is trying to transmit to [his] readers,” and names important examples such as Ibn Sīnā’s (d. 1037 CE) *Kitāb al-Šifa*, and Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī’s (d. 1209 CE) *Kitāb Ḥadā’iq al-Anwār fī Ḥaqā’iq al-Asrār*, among others.¹³⁴ He used secular traditional Arabic sources for his articles from authors such as Ibn al-Aṭīr (d. 1233 CE), Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d. 1377 CE), Ibn Ḥaldūn (d. 1406 CE) al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 1415 CE), and combined them with Western encyclopedic sources (such as *The New American Cyclopaedia*) attempting “to produce a synthesis of Eastern and Western knowledge.”¹³⁵ “This encyclopedia remained unique amongst the literature of the *Nahḍa* and is considered one of the preeminent representatives of that literary and educational movement.”¹³⁶

Al-Bustānī died in 1883 in Beirut, leaving the encyclopaedia incomplete in the hands of his sons, Salīm (1847–1884), followed by Nağīb (1863–1919) and Nasīb (1867–1913), and their cousin Sulaymān (1856–1925).¹³⁷ *Dā’irat Al-Ma’ārif* was published in eleven volumes, the first volume appearing in 1876 and the last in 1900. Volume 1 (1876) to Volume 6 (1882) were edited by Buṭrus al-Bustānī, and volumes 7 (1883) and 8 (1884) by his son Salīm, and were all printed at Maṭba’at al-Ma’ārif, in Beirut. They all had the same size of 19.3 x 28.2 cm and ranged between 808 to 755

¹³² Diderot & Alembert, 28 vols., Paris, 1751–1772.

¹³³ Buṭrus Al-Bustānī, *Dā’irat al-Ma’ārif*, Vol.I, Introduction (Beirut: Maṭba’at al-Ma’ārif, 1876) 2.

¹³⁴ Op. cit. Glass, “Reorganizing and Disseminating Knowledge during the *Nahḍa*, 2009, 113.

¹³⁵ Op. cit. Glass, “Reorganizing and Disseminating Knowledge during the *Nahḍa*, 2009, 113.

¹³⁶ Op. cit. Glass, “Reorganizing and Disseminating Knowledge during the *Nahḍa*, 2009, 102.

¹³⁷ Op. cit. Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, 2004. 18.

pages (with number of pages gradually diminishing between 1880 to 1900). Due to the death of Salīm in 1884, the work was carried out by his brothers and cousin. Volume 9 (1887) was printed at al-Maṭbaʿa al-Adabiyya (of Ḥalīl Sarkīs), in Beirut, but volumes 10 (1898) and 11 (1900) were printed at Maṭbaʿat al-Hilāl in Cairo—with volume eleven ending with a long entry on the Ottoman state *ʿuṭmāniyya (al-dawla al-ʿuṭmāniyya)*.¹³⁸

Along with his educational work and publication, Al-Bustānī contributed to the development of the Arabic press and the expansion of a new Arab readership. He employed the press as a means to educate and civilize the masses (*li-tamaddun al-ġumhūr*).¹³⁹ This work testifies to the efforts of the *Nahḍa* pioneers to disseminate in printed form to a literate Arab readership modern knowledge “within a cross-cultural framework.”¹⁴⁰ Sheehi states that: “upon their establishment, literary-scientific journals such as *al-Ġinān*, *al-Hilāl*, and *Miṣbāḥ al-Šarq* quickly became the medium for disseminating humanist and scientific knowledge and its concomitant discourse as well as new genres of literature.”¹⁴¹ He adds: “These men all agreed on a formula for social, cultural, and political renewal. If they could reawaken the Arabs’ passion for knowledge and build schools, printing presses, and libraries to foster its mastery, then Arabs would reproduce their “love of the fatherland” (*ḥubb al-waṭan*). This national love would create communal “concord and unity” (*ulfa wa ittiḥād*)¹⁴² and usher in a new era of national “progress and civilization” (*taqaddum wa tamaddun*).”¹⁴³

Al-Bustānī used his first broadsheet, *Nāfir Sūriya* (The Clarions of Syria), to express his views on the ills and needs of reforms in his country.¹⁴⁴ Later in his journal *al-Ġinān* (1870) whose purpose was explicitly to “strengthen, improve, and preserve” knowledge and the Arabic language,¹⁴⁵ he wrote on much broader cultural topics. He inspired his son and close collaborator Salīm,¹⁴⁶

¹³⁸ *Dāʾirat Al-Maʿārif* was published in eleven volumes between 1876—1900. Consulted copies of the Leiden University Library. For a detailed study of this encyclopedia Op. cit. Dagmar Glass, “Reorganizing and Disseminating Knowledge during the *Nahḍa*. 2009. 104–105. Cf. Albert Hourani, “Bustānī’s Encyclopaedia”, *Journal of Islamic Studies* (1990) 1 (1): 111–119

¹³⁹ Jeffrey Sacks, *Iterations of Loss: Mutilation and Aesthetic From, Al-Shidyaq to Darwish* (Fordham: Fordham University Press, 2015) 82.

¹⁴⁰ Op. cit. Dagmar Glass, “Reorganizing and Disseminating Knowledge during the *Nahḍa*. 2009. 101.

¹⁴¹ Op. cit. Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, 2004. 112.

¹⁴² A better translation for ‘*ulfa wa ittiḥād*’ is fellowship or love and unity.

¹⁴³ Op. cit. Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, 2004. 77.

¹⁴⁴ Buṭrus al-Bustānī in his *Nāfir Sūriya* (which starting from issue 3, he calls *Nāfir Sūriya aw al-waṭaniyya* (or the patriotic [paper])), he published eleven patriotic tracts in which he voices the ills of his country, preaches tolerance and social reform, the need for progress and civilization, and the love of the nation. Consulted copies from the collection of the Jaffet Library, American University of Beirut, Lebanon. *Nāfir Sūriya*: 1–11 (Beirut, 29 September 1860 – 22 April 1861).

¹⁴⁵ Buṭrus al-Bustānī, “al-Ġinān” in *al-Ġinān* 1 (1870): 1.

¹⁴⁶ Stephan Sheehi writes extensively on the underestimated literary contribution of Salīm al-Bustānī to modern Arabic fiction Op. cit. Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*: 76–78.

to forge a new literary genre, namely the serial short story and narrative fiction which were published in their periodical and its fortnightly and weekly newspapers *al-Ğanna* (1870) and *al-Ğunayna* (1871).¹⁴⁷

He was honored by the Ottoman State for “his late work, for his school [*al-Madrasa al-Waṭaniyya*], for his encyclopedia [*Kitāb Dāʿirat al-Maʿārif*], and for a new Arabic dictionary [*Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ*] which he dedicated to the Ottoman sultan Abdul-Aziz.¹⁴⁸ Al-Bustānī’s *Nahḍa* project towards cultural reform and modernization was to include several educational means that were communicated through textbooks and his school; through his broadsheets, periodicals and newspapers; through his publishing of a modern Arabic encyclopedia; all that have employed the printing press as a crucial vehicle for the organization, production, and dissemination of new literature, knowledge and liberal thought. He believed that by means of the printing press (books and technology, taking the Bulaq press as example)¹⁴⁹, the Arabs would be able to bridge their past heritage (the Arabic language, literature and sciences) with the European arts and crafts, and develop the necessary skills for cultural progress and the creation of a modern society.¹⁵⁰

The highlighted scholars and their publications, published by the American Press in the mid-nineteenth century, testify to the seminal role the press played in the publishing of modern scientific works, in the Arabic language, as well as new genres that merged older literary traditions with contemporary modern needs. These scholars helped revive interest in the study of the Arabic language and literature, and generated new genres like encyclopedias, periodicals and the modern Arabic novel. In order to best reflect this modern publishing endeavor, a new visual language had to be invented that best matched their texts and their aspirations.

¹⁴⁷ Salīm al-Bustānī’s works include: *Salma*, serialized in *al-Ğinān* 9 (1878) and 10 (1879). *Fātina*, serialized in *al-Ğinān* 8 (1877). “Zifāf Farid,” *al-Ğinān* 2 (1871): 447–53. *Sāmiya*, serialized in *al-Ğinān* 13 (1882) and 14 (1883). Salim wrote an editorial, “Rūḥ al-‘Aṣr,” *al-Ğinān* 1 (1870): 385–88, where he mentions the ‘new spirit,’ a recurring theme in his novels, such as *Bint al-‘Aṣr* (Daughter of the age), serialized in *al-Ğinān* 6 (1875). Sheehi describes him as a “prolific thinker” and a “consummate Arab Renaissance man” who “at a young age became the principal editor of *al-Ğinān* after its inaugural year.” For more information on the literary work and its influence on his contemporaries and modern Arab fiction. Op. cit. Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*: 18, 76–78.

¹⁴⁸ Op. cit. Makdisi, 2008. 208–209. For more on al-Bustānī’s secular and educational activities, Cf. Tibawi, ‘The American Missionaries in Beirut’: 166–174; Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*: 15–75. For information on Selim al-Bustānī, Cf. Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*: 76–106.

¹⁴⁹ Al-Bustānī writes in his 1859 *Ḥuṭba fi Adab al-‘Arab*: “The press that most deserves mention and that has enriched the Arab race with multifarious books is Bulaq. We are guided by the excellence of the organization of this press and the greatness of its benefits from the many books, originals and translations, which have been put out by it. When they had begun translating, the keen-eye of this press avoided, as much as possible, using foreign terms in what they translated from European languages (*al-luġa al-ifranġiyya*) although in the beginning, when the press was in the years of its infancy, they would use many Western terms despite the existence of the Arabic terms equivalent to them.” Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Ḥuṭba fi adab al-‘arab* ([Beirut]: n.p., [1859]), 1859:40. Cf. Yusuf Qizmakhuri, Ed. *al-Ğam’iyya al-Sūriyya Ḥuṭba lil-‘ulūm wa-al-funūn, 1847–1852*. (Beirut: Dār al-Ḥamrā’, 1990).

¹⁵⁰ Buṭrus al-Bustānī, lecture on ‘Science among the Arabs’, Beirut, 15 February 1859. Cf. Jeffrey Sacks, *Iterations of Loss: Mutilation and Aesthetic From, Al-Shidyāq to Darwish*, 2015. 82. Abdurazzak Patel, *The Arab Nahdah: The Making of the Intellectual and Humanist Movement* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013). Op. cit. Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, 2008. 22.

1.2.5. Aesthetic contribution

The 1887 catalogue of the American Press opens with a text on the title page that testifies to the press as a professional and independent printing and publishing establishment. It describes the press and its services as follows:

“Book publishers. Book binders. Lithographers. Electrotypers. Stereotypers and type founders. Job printing in many languages [in the Arabic introductory text specifying more precisely the “Arabic, Turkish, Persian and common European languages”]. Maps mounted and published. Punches and matrices made. Artistic printing [specified in the Arabic introductory text as printing scientific illustrations from “copper-engraved or lithographic plates” to illustrate works of “philosophy, chemistry, surgery, philology, geometry, natural science, zoology, or botany”]. A choice selection of English books kept on hand. Fine stationery for sale. Arabic and English type for sale, according to samples in this catalogue. Music printed in Eastern and Western styles. Orders for books from European, American or Beirut presses, promptly attended to.”¹⁵¹

The two major contributions of the American Press to Arabic book design are first its American Arabic font (known as the *amrīkānī*), that “harmonized the Oriental art of writing with the Western achievement in printing.”¹⁵² Its second contribution are the austere layouts of its publications that broke with the Arabic manuscript tradition and introduced clearly Western typographic conventions. These two aspects of its publications, their modern Arabic types and layouts, were associated with Arab modernity and thus defined the visual language of the late nineteenth century *Nahḍa* publications.

1.2.5.1. On Typography: the American Arabic font (*al-amrīkānī*)

The first Arabic font was supplied to the American Press in Malta in 1829 by the firm of Richard Watts¹⁵³ in London. Similarly to the font used by the Church Missionary Society press, it “was based on the style of Arabic designed by the British orientalist Charles Wilkins, and was cut by the typographer William Martin, a trainee of Baskerville.”¹⁵⁴ Only after 1834 and the move of the American Press from Malta to Beirut, was it realized that this font “was seriously defective.”¹⁵⁵ With Badger’s limited one-year contract, nearer sources from presses in Šuwayr, Smyrna and Šafad were sought to create the missing sorts. The font contained sorts that were different from those

¹⁵¹ *Illustrated Catalogue and Price List of Publications of the American Mission Press of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Beirut, Syria* (Beirut: 1887) 9–10.

¹⁵² Op. cit. Glass, Beirut 1998, 19.

¹⁵³ Leslie Howsam. *Cheap Bibles: Nineteenth-Century Publishing and the British and Foreign Bible Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 77–78.

¹⁵⁴ Op. cit. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 60.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 60.

of the original Watts design; “such as an unusual *alif-lām-alif* ligature with the second *alif* bent across almost horizontally. The smaller type-size used for catchwords and title-page quotations is also markedly different with its more elongated terminal *fā*, and generally more rounded appearance.”¹⁵⁶ The Watts and other types used at the American Press “lacked the authentic calligraphic quality needed to gain approval and acceptance among the educated Arab readers.”¹⁵⁷ Eli Smith was determined to remedy this by creating a new Arabic font based on local handwritten calligraphic hands.¹⁵⁸ He used his collection of calligraphic specimens from Istanbul, Damascus, Cairo and Aleppo and set out in 1836 to make a complete Arabic font. He sought the help of the skilled printer and type-founder of the mission press in Smyrna, Homan Hallock (1803–1894), to interpret these handwritten samples into proper printing types.¹⁵⁹ On his way to Germany, he was shipwrecked and lost the specimens. He then returned to Istanbul and prepared a duplicate of his original samples, for which Hallock eventually cut the punches and produced the matrices.¹⁶⁰ In the summer of 1838, Smith took the copper matrices to Leipzig, then one of the leading centers of printing in Germany, and had the types cast by the type foundry of Karl Tauchnitz, a “German pioneer of Oriental (including Arabic) typography.”¹⁶¹ The font was completed and shipped to Beirut in 1841. By 1844, the new typeface was made available in three sizes—a large size for body text, and a size for title pages/captions—fulfilling the basic requirements for adequately producing visually balanced Arabic books.¹⁶² In total, Hallock made “seven different sizes of type, embracing some four to five thousand steel punches.” The catalogues of 1877 and 1896 displays ten fonts¹⁶³ and list three sizes for titling: *Tuluṭ Kabīr* (Large Cap), *Tuluṭ Waṣaṭ* (Middle Cap),¹⁶⁴ *Tuluṭ Ṣaḡīr* (Small Cap); five sizes for text setting: *Al-Ġins al-Awwal Muṣakkal* (First Ft. Vowelled), *Al-Ġins al-Awwal*

¹⁵⁶ Op. cit. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 61.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 61.

¹⁵⁸ Roper believes that al-Šidyāq’s printing types and typographic layout innovations had a considerable influence on the early type designs and books of the American Press in Beirut, prompting Dr Eli Smith to design and cut a second Arabic font (later know as the *Amrikānī* or the American Arabic) based on modern and local calligraphic styles. Geoffrey Roper, “Fāris al-Šidyāq and the Transition from Scribal to Print Culture in the Middle East,” *The book in the Islamic World*, Ed. George N. Atiyeh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995) 209–224.

¹⁵⁹ Glass, Beirut 1998, 20.

¹⁶⁰ Glass points to the fact that there is no conclusive evidence that shows which exact samples did Hallock use for making the final punches, and how he interpreted the handwritten samples to create a cohesive character set for the first American Arabic font. Ibid. Glass, Beirut 1998, 20.

¹⁶¹ Op. cit. Glass, Beirut 1998, 21.

¹⁶² Op. cit. Auji, 2013. 100.

¹⁶³ In the specimen pages of the 1887 catalogue, *Aḥruf Kabīra* “Extra Large” Tuluṭ font of 75 mm cap height is displayed. This disappears from the later catalogue of 1896. It is unclear how these fonts were used, but they certainly look more fit for posters than book design. *Illustrated Catalogue and Price List of Publications of the American Mission Press of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Beirut, Syria* (Beirut: 1887) 9.

¹⁶⁴ This font and size appears only in the 1896 catalogue and is not yet in the 1877 catalogue.

Baṣīṭ (First Ft. Plain), *Al-Ġins al-Ṭānī Muṣakkaḥ* (Second Ft. Vowelled), *Al-Ġins al-Ṭānī Baṣīṭ* (Second Ft. Plain), *Al-Ġins al-Ṭānī Samīk* (Second Ft. Thick); and two small sizes for footnotes and captions: *Al-Ġins al-Ṭālīṭ* (Third Ft.) and *Al-Ġins al-Rābiʿ* (Fourth Ft.). The titling fonts which they referred to in the type specimen pages of the catalogues as “Caps”, are a modern typographic interpretation of the *Ṭuluṭ* style, whereas the textfaces simply referred to as “Ft (font)” are a typographic *Nash* style. The fact that only its “First Ft.” and “Second Ft.” came in vocalized (“Vowelled”) variants indicates that these were the fonts used for educational text setting, whereas their bold (“Thick”) variant was used for emphasis or subheadings. The fact the smallest text sizes (“Third Ft.” and “Fourth Ft.”) did not come in vocalized or bold versions points to the technical challenges of creating vocalized or bold Arabic fonts at these small sizes. Moreover, it was unnecessary to have vocalized versions of these small sizes since they were only used for short texts on titles pages, and for footnotes or captions. The American Press with its set of printing types, though modern and functional, did maintain some typical conventions borrowed from the Ottoman manuscript tradition. They used *Ṭuluṭ* style fonts for large titles and *Nash* style fonts for running text, footnotes, and captions. However, they introduced a new western convention; a bold font (‘Thick’) to be used for emphasis and/or subheadings.¹⁶⁵

The Arabic font of the American Press became known as the *amrīkānī* or ‘the American Arabic.’¹⁶⁶ The font had “a characteristic attenuated and forward-sloping appearance, and was used by several other presses in the Arab world.”¹⁶⁷ On close observation of printed material, the American Arabic types, though based on nineteenth century Ottoman *Nash* style, were essentially low-contrast typefaces that slightly emulated informal handwriting. They are highly legible and express above all Protestant pragmatism and austerity, as well as a modern and simple aesthetic. The left-slanted vertical strokes gave the font a forward movement that helped guide the eyes along the reading direction, thus facilitating a faster reading pace. Its condensed forms and its stacked baselines and ligatures, all contributed to the elegant visual appearance of the text as well as to an economy of space, and therefore a cost-effective book production. The pages set in these types had a light and airy texture, a clarity that was inviting for reading, and would suggest one of the many reasons that made the American Arabic types such a success across the Arab East in the second half of the nineteenth century. The popularity of these types is also due to their availability to smaller local printers, since “over the years, [the American Press] had acquired the equipment

¹⁶⁵ This convention remained well into the twentieth century the only way (in the absence of italics) to create emphasis on a particular word within a text.

¹⁶⁶ Miroslav Krek, “Some observations on printing Arabic in America and by Americans Abroad,” *Manuscripts of the Middle East*, 6 (1992) 85.

¹⁶⁷ Op. cit. Roper, “History of the Book in the Muslim World,” 2010, 334.

necessary to cast and cut types in-house”¹⁶⁸ which allowed the press to supply other presses with locally produced fonts.

According to Geoffrey Roper: “This new American Arabic typeface had some drawbacks of its own. It was somewhat ill-proportioned, with the vertical strokes too thin in relation to the curves and horizontals, and an exaggerated forward slope. Nevertheless, it must be considered as a notable success, in view of the acceptance that it subsequently gained in the Arab world.”¹⁶⁹ Hala Auji on the other hand attributes this “popularity of the American Arabic types not so much to either their ‘beauty’ or the ‘uniform nature’ of their letters that closely emulated calligraphic writing,”¹⁷⁰ but rather to the fact that the types resolved a number of problems that printing in Arabic presented at the time. Namely, the cursive nature of the script that required the letters to connect seamlessly, and therefore implied that letters had several forms depending on their position in a word, and that for better visual balance and smooth connections ligatures were required to best achieve certain letter combinations. In addition, the use of vocalization marks (soft vowel marks) where accuracy of pronunciation and disambiguation is required (like for religious texts, poetry, and educational or children’s publications) required the invention of a good locking system. “The new metal type contained grooves into which compositors could insert metal sorts with vowel mark glyphs, thus bringing each vowel closer to its respective letter”¹⁷¹ and avoiding any confusion in discerning the right vowel/letter combination. Even with all its inventive solutions, typesetting remained a labor-intensive and slow process. “It was not until the mid 1860s that the press succeeded in producing fully vocalized bibles in multiple editions through the reliance on electrotpe plates. Initially suggested in 1862, electrotyping the mission’s newly completed Bible with vowel marks first took place in 1864. Since the plate making technology was still not in use by local presses, plates for the vocalized Bible were produced in New York under Van Dyck’s supervision and then shipped to Beirut for further use.”¹⁷²

“Once introduced, the American Arabic was to leave its mark.”¹⁷³ It was used by several printing establishment in Beirut and other Arab cities from 1850s onwards¹⁷⁴—even temporarily

¹⁶⁸ Op. cit. Auji, 2013. 156.

¹⁶⁹ Op. cit. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 63.

¹⁷⁰ Op. cit. Auji, 2013. 152.

¹⁷¹ Op. cit. Auji, 2013. 153.

¹⁷² Op.cit. Auji, 2013. 155.

¹⁷³ Op. cit. Glass, Beirut 1998, 25.

¹⁷⁴ Op. cit. Glass, Beirut 1998, 27.

by the Imprimerie Catholique of Beirut and Mosul.¹⁷⁵ The fonts were employed for typesetting widely circulated textbooks, such as the series of Arabic textbooks by Cornelius Van Dyck, entitled *al-Naqš fi al-Ḥağar* (*Engraving in Stone*, 8 vols., published between 1886 and 1889 by Ḥalīl Sarkīs' al-Maṭba'a al-Adabiyya).¹⁷⁶ They were also used by Buṭrus al-Bustānī's Maṭba'at al-Ma'ārif for publishing among other his famous first encyclopedia in Arabic, *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif* (first volume appearing in 1876).¹⁷⁷ The American Arabic types were not confined to Christian schools and textbooks, they were also used by modern Muslim scholars and printing presses. The first modern Muslim elementary textbook, *Kitāb al-Hiğā' li-Ta'lim al-Atfāl* by Šayḥ 'Abd al-Qādir al-Qabbānī (1848-1935), as well as his newspaper *Tamarāt al-Funūn* (*Fruits of the Arts*, 1875–1908),¹⁷⁸ were set with the American Arabic font and printed at Maṭba'at al-Funūn, a printing press owned and managed by the charitable Muslim organization, Ġam'iyat al-Maqāsid al-Ḥayriyya al-Islāmiyya.¹⁷⁹

The American Press with its American Arabic font not only helped the development of an independent book publishing industry in late nineteenth century Beirut, but is also provided fonts for a diverse Arabic press from newspapers, periodicals and journals. Starting with its very own, *Mağmū' Fawā'id* (*Collection of Interesting Facts*), the first Arabic periodical to be produced in Beirut, then al-Bustānī's first Arabic newspaper to be produced by a native Arab, *Al-Ġinān* (*The Gardens*, 1870-1886, dealing with political and literary topics), Ḥalīl al-Ḥūrī's newspaper, *Ḥadiqat al-Aḥbār* (*The Garden of News*, 1858–1868, printed at al-Maṭba'a al-Sūriyya), and Ḥalīl Sarkīs' newspaper, *Lisān al-Ḥāl* (*Tongue of the Present*, 1877–1986, printed at al-Maṭba'a al-Adabiyya).

All these widely read periodicals typeset in the American Arabic fonts, brought the American Press aesthetics to a literate Arab readership. This aesthetic was to spread further beyond the confines when one of the renowned periodicals typeset in the American Arabic, the first Arabic scientific periodical *al-Muqtaṭaf* (*The Digest*, founded in 1876), moved with its founders to Cairo in the mid 1880s. *Al-Muqtaṭaf* introduced this modern style of Arabic types into a new socio-cultural context as their periodical became one of the most influential journals of that time. However, the fonts and design of *al-Muqtaṭaf*, for unclear reasons (that may be cultural or

¹⁷⁵ Louis Cheikho, *Tārīḥ Fann al-Ṭibā'a fi al-Mašriq* (Beirut: Dār al-Mašriq, 1987, 1995), 61. According to Louis Cheikho the Imprimerie Catholique “replaced in 1868, its Parisian fonts with fonts of the American Arabic (simple and vowelled) that it used to print some books such as *Mağma' al-Baḥrayn* and *Nuḥab al-Mulaḥ*, and until it replaced those by types from Istanbul.” Cf. Krek, 85. Auji, 151, 152.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. Glass, Beirut 1998, 27-28.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. Glass, Beirut 1998, 27.

¹⁷⁸ *Tamarāt al-Funūn* under the directorship of Šayḥ al-Qabbānī rallied for the opening of schools in Beirut and providing education to Muslim boys and girls equally. Cf. Īmān Muḥyi al-Dīn al-Manāšfi, Hišām Našāba, *al-Šayḥ 'Abd al-Qādir al-Qabbānī wa Ġarīdat Tamarāt al-Funūn* (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm lil-Malāyīn, 2008).

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. Glass, Beirut 1998, 28.

practical, or both) eventually relinquished its American Arabic font and original layout for a more local (Egyptian) one.¹⁸⁰

The look of the American Arabic font came to characterize the publications that accompanied and embodied the *Nahḍa* publications, especially in the Arab Levant,¹⁸¹ in the second half of the nineteenth century. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the American Arabic fonts were slowly substituted by indigenous Arabic fonts, but a model for creating modern and pragmatic Arabic fonts was established. An example of this is Ibrāhīm al-Yāziǧī's magazine *Al-Ḍiyā'* (*The Radiance*, published between 1898 and 1905, and printed by Maṭba'at al-Ma'ārif in Cairo). Its founder, the celebrated Lebanese poet, writer and journalist, Ibrāhīm al-Yāziǧī (1847-1906), played a pioneering role in modern Arabic typography. Next to being a poet, he was "a talented and successful engraver" that designed a simplified Arabic character set, reducing the roughly 300 characters necessary for typesetting Arabic until the 1880s, to only 60 characters. He drew and cast his new fonts in three different sizes (24, 20, and 16pt), meeting the economic constraints of printing a periodical in large quantities, while preserving the aesthetic demands of his readership. His magazine *al-Ḍiyā'* "was one of the first nineteenth century publications to use these new types."¹⁸²

1.2.5.2. On book design

Like the Church Missionary Society press in Malta, the American Press of Beirut also introduced to Arabic book design and typesetting European/American typographical conventions such as punctuation, page numbers, running heads, footnotes and separate title pages.¹⁸³ On examination of their books published between 1853 and 1904 we can detect an evolution of their book design style away from the Arabic manuscript tradition to a more typographic and stark text-based design.

Their early books from the 1830s-1840s had a subtle emulation of the Arabic manuscript design conventions, similar to the early books of the Būlāq Press in Cairo. The books had no title

¹⁸⁰ Op. cit. Glass, Beirut 1998, 31.

¹⁸¹ Op. cit. Roper, *Harvard Bulletin*, 50.

¹⁸² Op. cit. Glass, Beirut 1998, 31-32.

¹⁸³ Nineteenth century Egyptian books, from al-Maṭba'a al-Amīriyya lacked a title page and punctuation, marginal commentary and notes were used in lieu of footnotes. An example of this is the Rifā'a Rāfi' al-Ṭaḥṭāwī book *Taḥlīṣ al-Ibrīz fī Talḥīṣ Bārīz*. Būlāq, Cairo: al-Maṭba'a al-Amīriyya, 1834.

page and often started with a simplified *sarlawh*,¹⁸⁴ and a modified *basmala*: “*bismillāh al-fattāh*” (*in the name of God the Opener*). The layouts followed Ottoman conventions: texts were set justified within borders, there was no punctuation, sentences were separated by a star-shaped sort, and the books ended with a tapered colophon. This can be seen as the American’s way of making their books accepted by Arab readers who were accustomed to manuscript design—or to the books of al-Maṭba‘a al-Amīriyya in Bulāq (also known as the Bulaq Press) that were distributed in Syria during that period—both of which Smith must have been acquainted with during his research on Arabic type design during his sojourn in Cairo. Auji refers to this aspect of the early American Press books by attributing the visual referencing of the traditional Arabic manuscript to the fact that in its early days the press relied on local scribes and scholars (like Nāṣif al-Yāziḡī and Buṭrus al-Bustānī) for helping with translation composition and overall design of its publications. “During this period, these scholars were more familiar with manuscript production—as scribes, copyists, and calligraphers—than print.”¹⁸⁵ She specifically mentions al-Yāziḡī’s influence as press corrector over the style and composition of the mission’s publications.¹⁸⁶

Most of the early books produced by the American Press were as small pamphlets, and many were the size of a pocket-diary. Here are three examples: (a) *al-Mar‘a ‘ala al-Bīr* (*The Pasture over the Well*, n.d., n.p.) is 16 pages, 7.6 cm x 5 cm, with an average of 50 words to the page; (b) *Kitāb al-Īmān* (*The Diary of Belief*, Beirut, 1843) is 46 pages, 11.4cm x 7.6cm, with an average of 100 words to the page; (c) *Kitāb Ta‘līm al-Qirā’a* (*Reading Primer*, Beirut, 1846) is 58 pages with an average of 120 words to the page.¹⁸⁷ Book design at the American Press changed with the increase in readership, but also because of it. Its growing reputation and the sales of its Arabic fonts to other printing presses or publishing houses like that of al-Maṭba‘a al-Adabiyya of Ḥalīl Sarkīs, familiarized the larger public with the aesthetic qualities of the American Press fonts (and books). The books became more austere in design for economic and practical reasons to meet the growing demands of its educational institutions. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign

¹⁸⁴ An illuminated or decorated headpiece employed for the upper part of an incipit page. According to Adam Gacek: “There is no consensus as to the exact meaning of some of these terms. Thus, Akimushkin and Ivanov use the term *‘unwān* for the illumination of the upper part of the incipit page and *sarlawh* for the entire page, whereas for B. W. Robinson *‘unwān* is an illuminated one- or double page opening and *sarlawh* is confined to the upper part of the page (see also Deroche et. al. 2006: 225). It is this latter usage of the term *sarlawh* (lit. ‘head board’) which appears to be more correct.” Cf. Adam Gacek. *Arabic Manuscripts, A Vademecum for Readers* (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2009) 120.

¹⁸⁵ Op. cit. Auji. 2013. 83–84.

¹⁸⁶ Op. cit. Auji. 2013. “Stated in a press report from 1855: “The style of composition, owing in a good degree to the ability and taste of the Arab corrector [Yāziḡī], is setting the standard of Modern Arabic writing, and creating a taste for reading where our books are circulated.” United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., RG 115, 1:25, Report on the Printing Establishment, 1 Oct 1855.

¹⁸⁷ Op. cit. Tibawi, 1966. 149.

Missions complained about the expenses and encouraged the press to produce commercial work for other clients and become a self-sustainable operation.¹⁸⁸

Another reason for this austerity in style can be attributed to the aesthetic sensitivity of the printer, and de-facto designer of the press Mr. Hurter (who took charge of the press in 1841). Hurter's experience as an Ohio news printer, excludes his knowledge of Arabic calligraphic and manuscript conventions. Instead he brought along his own American design aesthetics and overhauled the old design standards and layout conventions, and introduced a new visual language of western organizational methods. The design of printed books after 1842 abandoned the local manuscript tradition that employed excessive ornaments, hand-engraved calligraphic sorts for chapter titles, and catchwords for navigational aids.¹⁸⁹ They "displayed different organization methods," using "page numbers in lieu of the cumbersome catchwords" and simpler design for title pages.¹⁹⁰ Publishing information (date, publisher and location) were excluded from the title page and were placed at the end of the book, up until the 1870s when this convention changed and the publishing information started to appear in small text at the bottom of title pages. Their typesetting of Arabic text with ample leading and generous margins, though dictated by the justified text alignment, originated in nineteenth century American book design aesthetics, and was applied to the design of their Arabic books. This preference for airy and visually light pages lends the text a modern look of clarity, devoid of clutter and ornament, and more in tune with the pragmatic and functional Protestant principles.

This book design style was adopted by modernist scholars like Nāṣīf al-Yāziǧī and Buṭrus al-Bustānī as the perfect representation of their secular and scientific publications.¹⁹¹ Through these engaged and outspoken individuals, this functional and minimal style of book design came to represent the publications of Arab modernity.¹⁹² Their visually non-traditional and functional style became representative of a break with tradition in favor of a secular representation of what could an Arab modernity look like. Using their experiences as correctors and supervisors at the American Press they appropriated this austere Protestant aesthetic for their own scientific and secular publications aimed at the emerging Arab print culture. To illustrate this fact Auji makes a comparison between two editions of the same book by al-Yāziǧī:

¹⁸⁸ Op. cit. Auji, 2013. 137. Cf. American Board of Commissioners 16.8.1, Documents, Reports, Misc. Letters A-D, v.6, Annual Report of the Syria Mission, 1860.

¹⁸⁹ Op. cit. Auji, 92–92.

¹⁹⁰ Op. cit. Auji, 2013. 104–106.

¹⁹¹ Op. cit. Auji, 2013. 168.

¹⁹² Op. cit. Auji, 2013. 169, 170.

“In fact, books printed at the American Press in the mid 1840s and into the 1860s appeared to fall more in line with what one would expect from a Presbyterian aesthetic—starkly designed, straightforward text-emphasized layouts. This disconnect from its previous design practices is perhaps most strikingly apparent in an 1854 edition of Yāzījī’s grammar, [*Kitāb Faṣl al-Ḥiṭāb fī Uṣūl Luġat al-ʿTrāb (A Discourse on the Rules of Grammar)*]¹⁹³ In addition to the lack of excessive embellishment that prominently featured in the book’s first edition (1836), the book’s incipit page featuring the requisite doxological *fātiha* (or “opening”) abandons the explicitly Muslim incantation used in the past in favor of the more ambiguous *bismillāh al-fattāḥ* (or “in the name of God the Opener”).”¹⁹⁴

By comparison, the design of the first edition of Al-Yāziġī’s *Kitāb Faṣl al-Ḥiṭāb* (1836) emulated the manuscript tradition in a number of ways. The book’s introductory double-page spread simulated with typographic sorts the traditional *ʿunwān*,¹⁹⁵ starting on the upper part of the right page with a *sarlawḥ* (an ornamental head piece that crowns the section headings),¹⁹⁶ recalling the manuscript tradition of ornamental incipit pages. This *sarlawḥ* consisted of a large square cartouch, crowned by an architectural motif of three spires, and containing a large engraved *basmala* in the form of an ornate *tuġrā*¹⁹⁷ design with the muslim incantation *bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm* (*in the name of God the all-merciful*). This cartouch and the opening text that follows are enclosed in a border consisting of repeating rosettes and floral sorts.

Another example is al-Yāziġī’s book from 1856, *Kitāb Maġmaʿ al-Baḥrayn* (size 12.5 x 21.5 cm). The book states in its colophon that it was printed on the account of Mr. Naḥla al-Mudawwar. It opens with a simplified *sarlawḥ*, and the inscription *bismillāh al-fattāḥ* (*in the name of God the Opener*). Some traditional layout conventions persist: no punctuation and sentences are separated by a star (superscript and placed in between brackets). However, other modern conventions are introduced: though fonts do not vary in weight, hierarchy is achieved by varying type sizes. There are two standard sizes for the fonts, one for the main body text and a slightly smaller one for footnotes. A third even smaller type size is used for superscript and numerals. The text is justified within a double-line frame, and titles are centered above paragraphs that start with an indent of 10 mm. Navigational aids (page numbers and title of chapters) are placed centered in the top margin outside the frame enclosing the main text. The page layout is mirrored on facing pages,

¹⁹³ The first edition was written by Al-Yāziġī, was published and printed by the American Press in 1836. It was a popular textbook and was reprinted in 1854, 1866, and 1887.

¹⁹⁴ Op. cit. Auji, 90, 91.

¹⁹⁵ An illuminated double-page opening, in codices, showing a decorated chapter heading. Cf. Adam Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts a Vademecum for Readers*. (Leiden: Brill, 2009) 119–120.

¹⁹⁶ Adam Gacek. *Arabic lithographed books in the Islamic Studies Library*. (Montreal: McGill University Libraries, 1996) 120–122.

¹⁹⁷ For more on this Ottoman calligraphic tradition and its many uses. Cf. Sheila Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006) 336–37, 379–80, 508–13.

creating symmetrical double-page spreads. The book ends with tapered text endings. Several books examined from that period show similar visual characteristics with minor variations (mostly in the sorts used for the ornamental frame on the title page, or for the opening chapter pages).

Book designs and layouts became gradually more Western, functional and simple in design, with no features or elements that recalled the Arabic manuscript tradition. By the early twentieth century, all text-framing borders and ornamentation were removed even from title pages. Only a thin line above the textblock was used to separate the main text and titles from the running heads and page numbering in the top margin. Also a similar thin line was used to separate the footnotes (at the bottom of the page) from the main text block. A bold font was used to mark titles and subtitles, as well as variations in type sizes to mark the hierarchy of information in the text. These conventions have become universal and remain in use in most printed Arabic books—with minor variations—to this day.

1.2.6. Conclusion

The American Press of Beirut has put forward a new Arabic book design aesthetic that came to represent the look of the *nahḍa* publications and Arab modernity in its early transformative years. Through the work of some of the intellectuals that have worked at the press, and the ones that have gone to set up their own printing presses and publishing houses—the likes of Buṭrus al-Bustānī, Ḥalīl Sarkīs, Fāris Nimr and Ya‘qūb Ṣarrūf—this stark and simple aesthetic spread beyond the confines of the American Press, and Beirut, becoming emblematic of a modern type of secular Arabic book. This puritan aesthetic, with its low-contrast and less calligraphic fonts, and its ornament-free and stark book layouts, was interpreted as a break with tradition by liberal thinkers like Bustānī, and was employed in promoting secular ideals that were believed to be instrumental for creating a cohesive Arab society that upheld reason, equality and unity amongst its diverse religious communities—particularly necessary within Ottoman Syria and in the aftermath of sectarian strife in the second half of the nineteenth century.

A notable example of this aesthetic is Buṭrus al-Bustānī’s Arabic encyclopedia, *Dā’irat al-Ma‘ārif* (1876–1900). The books were typeset with the *American Arabic type*, set in two justified columns (separated by a thin line) and framed by a simple 2-line border, with a text area of 14.4 x 22.3 cm on page of 19.3 x 28.2 cm, leaving generous margins around—with *lemmata* set centered outside the frame above its corresponding column, as well as page numbers and volume number below the frame, aligned with the outer margins of the frame. The headline of each entry in larger and more calligraphic font and set centered above the column with the title repeated transliterated or translated in French underneath it. Each chapter (*bāb*) starts with a large title set in the large

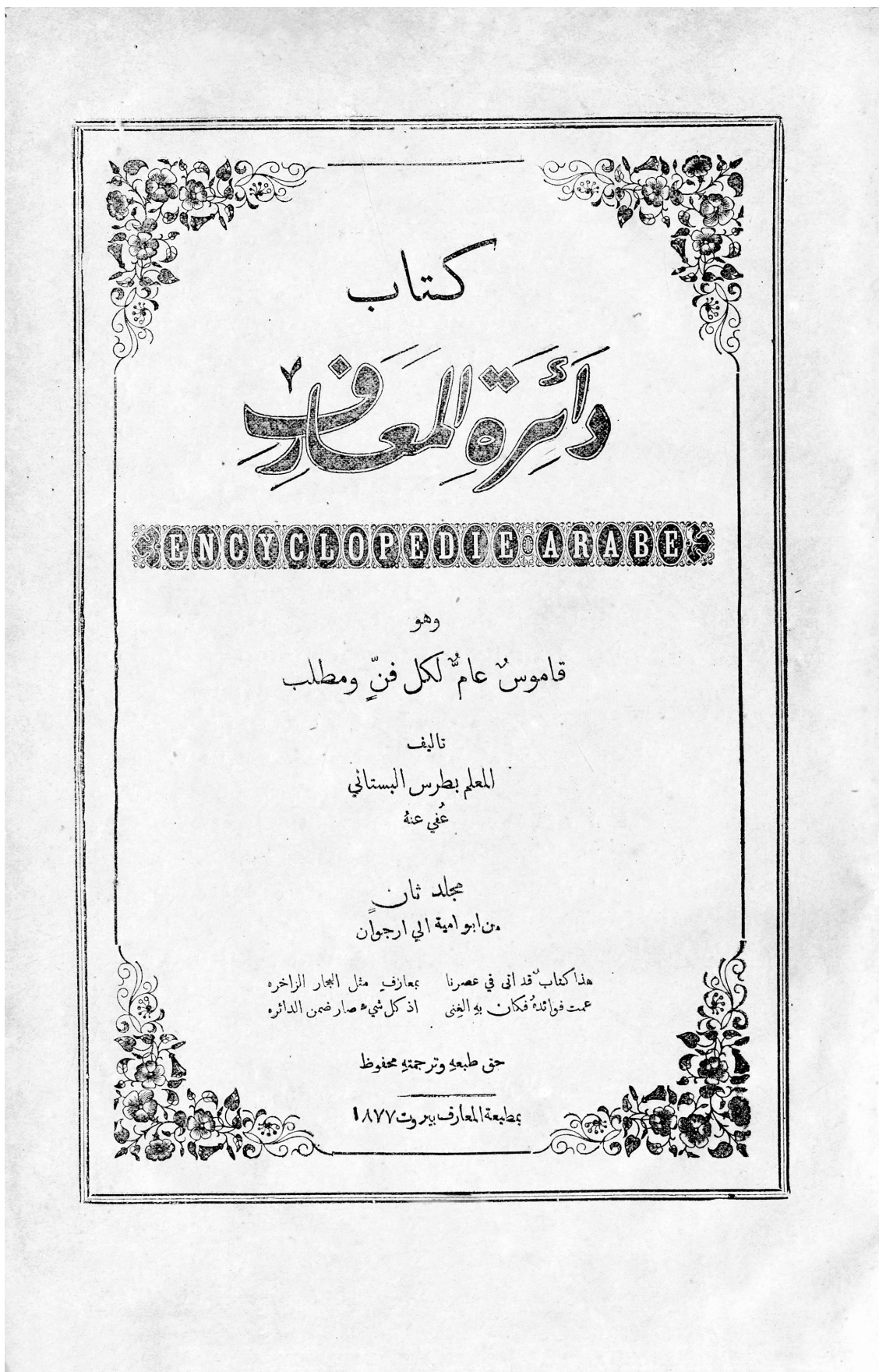
American Arabic font, with ample space around it and a decorative frame that forms a modern and simplified *ʿunwān* set inside the simple 2-line text frame. This demonstrates a synthesis of Eastern and Western design that best reflects the content (which itself was a synthesis of Eastern and Western knowledge). This layout was consistent throughout the 11 volumes of the encyclopedia, giving the series a unique character. Illustrations were also used from the very beginning but starting from volume 4, they became larger, numbered (with references guiding the reader to their corresponding article), better executed as woodcuts, printed on one-side of thicker paper, and placed as plates at the end of each volume.¹⁹⁸ Bustānī is supposed to have acquired these woodcut illustrations from the American firm of Appleton and Company, the publishers of the *New American Cyclopaedia* that served as one of the models for Bustānī's own encyclopedia.¹⁹⁹

According to Glass, the original figure behind this aesthetic, the non-Arab missionary Eli Smith, "may have been guided by the idea that the Arabic book could only secure a future as a vehicle of culture, if the glorious writing traditions of the past could be effectively bridged. Only by taking the fastidious Arab taste in calligraphy into consideration, could the pace and the peculiar pattern of the modernization of Arabic publishing be accommodated. This has meant that every protagonist of the printed Arabic word has had to pay his respect to calligraphy and every technical solution has had to be measured against the high standards of this art."²⁰⁰ I would add to this observation that this still holds true to this day. In this manner the American Press sowed the seeds for a modern Arabic book aesthetic and came to instigate competition from its main rival and fierce competitor, the Imprimerie Catholique (the Catholic Press of Beirut).

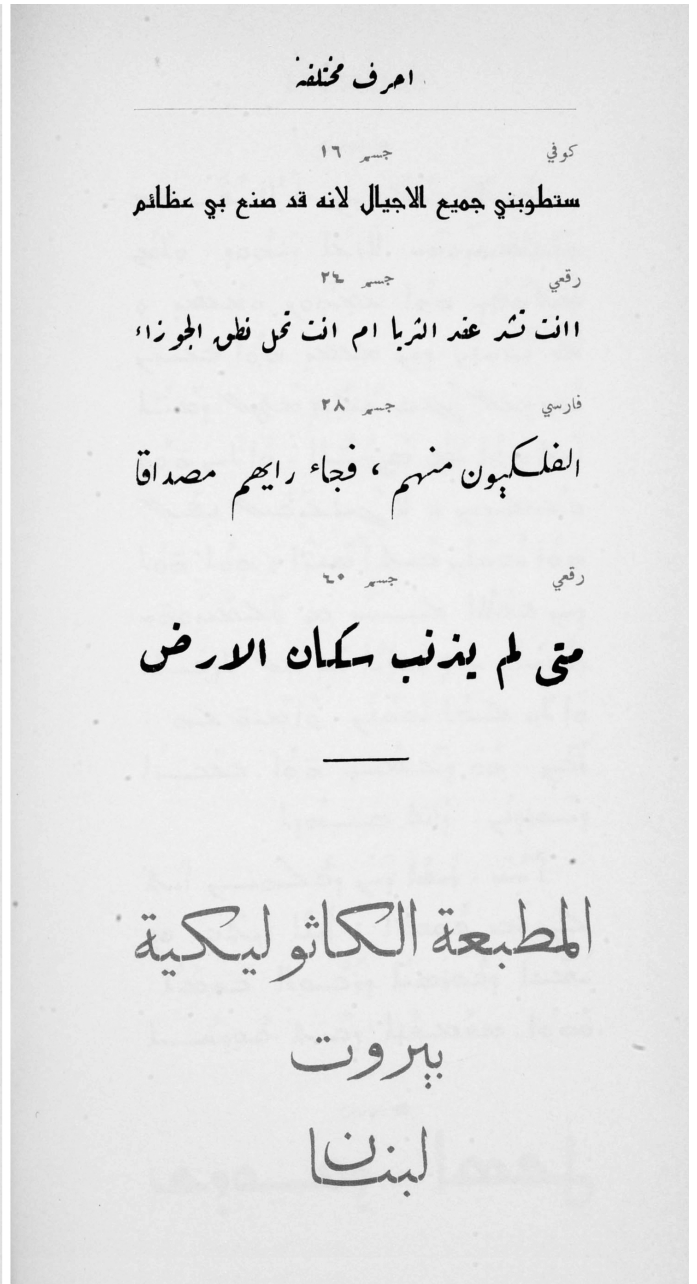
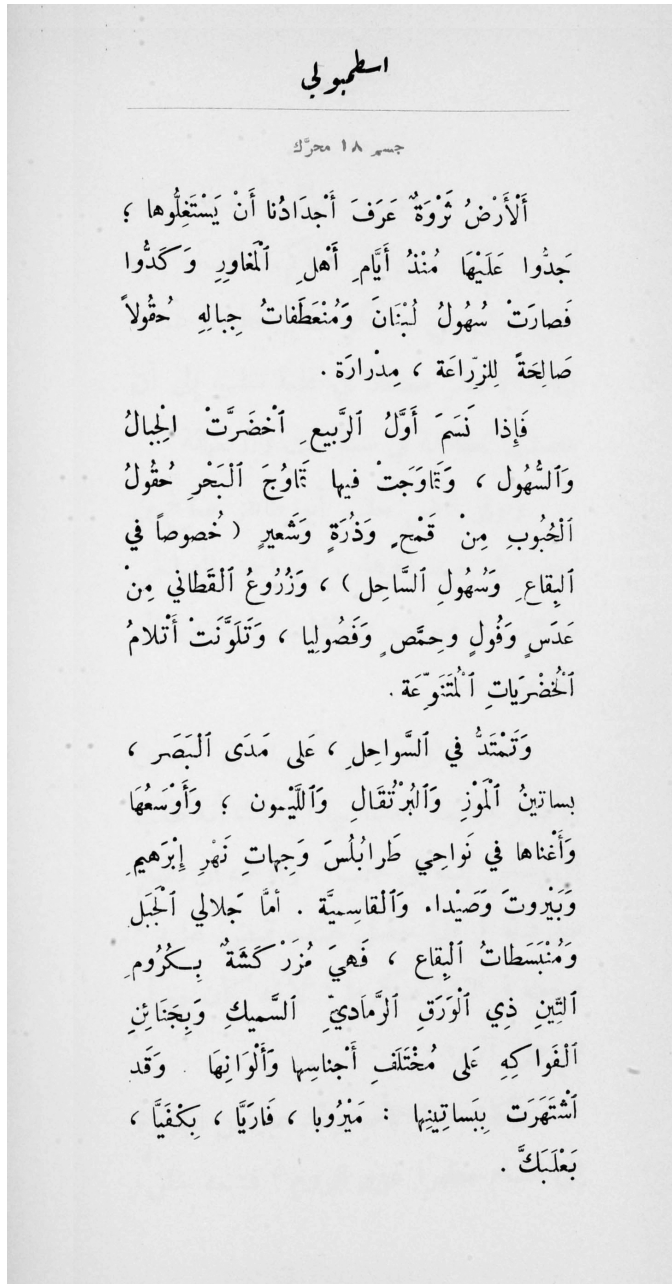
¹⁹⁸ Bustānī, *Dāʾirat al-Maʾārif*, Vol. 4, Introduction, 1. Consulted are copies of the Leiden University Library's collection. For further study of this encyclopedia see Dagmar Glass, "Reorganizing and Disseminating Knowledge during the *Nahḍa*: Bustānī's Encyclopédie arabe Revisited," *Islamica: Studies in Memory of Holger Preißler (1943–2006)*, Andreas Christmann, Jan-Peter Hartung, Eds., in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Supplement 26 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 104–105. and Albert Hourani, "Bustānī's Encyclopaedia", *Journal of Islamic Studies* (1990) 1 (1): 111–119

¹⁹⁹ D. Appleton and Company was founded by Daniel Appleton (Massachusetts in 1813). "In 1931, Daniel published the first book, William Mason's *Crumbs from the Master's Table*. By 1847, after issuing many travel guides, including the best selling *European Guide Book*, William Henry considered the store a sideline and was concentrating on publishing. With the death of father Daniel in 1849, William was joined by his brothers, John, George, and Samuel. Together, they issued the *New American Cyclopaedia* and the *Unabridged English Dictionary*, which made the Appleton name world famous. Under William Henry's son, William Worthen Appleton, the company grew to become one of the world's most important publishing houses. In 1933, Appleton merged with Century to create a new company, D. Appleton-Century Co. Then in 1948, D. Appleton-Century Co. merged with F.S. Crofts, Inc. and by the 1960s the company was sold to Prentice-Hall." Website: <http://www.biblio.com/publisher/d-appleton-company>. Last consulted 8 July 2015. Cf. *Appleton-Century mss., 1846–1962*. Records, 1846–1962, of D. Appleton-Century Company at the Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

²⁰⁰ Op. cit. Glass, Beirut 1998, 33.



Butrus al-Bustānī, *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif wa-Huwa Qāmūsun 'Āmmun li-kulli Fannin wa-Maṭlab* (*Encyclopédie arabe*), the first modern Arabic encyclopedia in 11 volumes, set in American Arabic fonts (Beirut: al-Ma'arif Press, 1876-1900). Title page of vol. 2 (1877).



Sample pages from a type specimen book for the Imprimerie Catholique in Beirut, showing the *Stambuli* vocalized font (*Isṭanbūli muḥarrak*) in 18 pt, and other fonts (*ḥurūf muḥtalifa*) in *kufi*, *ruqʿī*, *fārisī*, and *tulūṭ* styles. *Caractères Imprimerie Catholique Beyrouth (Liban)*, (undated ca.1950s). Bibliothèque Orientale Collection, Université Saint Joseph, Beirut.

1.3. The Imprimerie Catholique (Catholic Press)

1.3.1. Context

The Imprimerie Catholique was the third printing press established in Beirut in 1848, after the Greek Orthodox press (1751) and the American Press (1822).²⁰¹ It served to consolidate the presence of the Jesuits in the Middle East in 1831, and their indigenous counterpart, the Maronite denomination. The Maronites moved to Lebanon following the massacres in the Orontes valley (in the fifth century CE), taking refuge and settling in the then “unreachable and inhospitable” terrain of the high Mount Lebanon peaks.²⁰² Their history goes back to the first Christian Monks, followers of the hermit Mār Mārūn, who arrived in the northern parts of Mount Lebanon and started preaching their religion to the local inhabitants. They eventually established the full formation of the Maronite Church in 687 with its Patriarchal Seat in Bkirki, in Mount Lebanon.²⁰³ In the 12th century when the Crusaders ruled the coast of Syria, they embraced the Roman Catholic doctrine and accepted the supremacy of the Pope.²⁰⁴ They found support from the French Monarchy and its religious missions, especially under the nineteenth century Ottoman rule.

In the late nineteenth century and with the growing spread of the American Protestant missions in Beirut and Southern Mount Lebanon, the Maronites sought the help of the Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries to halt the spread of Protestantism and its ever encroaching presence and attempts at converting members of the Maronite community. Since the Protestant missionaries were gaining popularity through their educational institutions, the Catholics felt the need to match them by founding more open and modern educational institutions, and by publishing the ‘correct’ scriptures and books. They lobbied the French King and obtained sufficient funding; eventually opening their own printing press (and publishing house), their own schools and own university, Université Saint Joseph (USJ), which is in operation to this day in Beirut.

The first Jesuits from Lyon arrived in Beirut in 1831 looking for the means to open a college for young people, as well as a seminary to train future Catholic priests, as a response to the threat of the encroaching Protestant missions. Their goal was not strictly limited to Lebanon, but

²⁰¹ The first press established in Beirut was the Greek Orthodox Press of the St. George monastery, founded in 1751. The second press was the American Press of Beirut, founded in 1822 in Malta, and moved to Beirut in 1834. See Louis Cheikho (Šayḥu, Luwīs), *Tārīḥ Fann-al-Ṭibāʿa fi al-Mašriq* (*History of the art of printing in the Arab East*), 2nd Ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Mašriq, 1995) 43, 46, 56.

²⁰² William Harris, *Lebanon A History* (London: Oxford University Press, 2012) 44.

²⁰³ Fr. Elias Khalifeh el-Hashem, “The Rise of Eastern Churches and their Heritage (5th-8th Century). Churches of the Syriac Tradition. III. The Maronites”, Habib Badr, Ed. *Christianity: A History in the Middle East* (Beirut: Middle East Council of Churches, 200), 277–86. Cf. Fr. Rīmūn Hāšim, *Dirāsāt Taḥlīliyya fi Tārīḥ al-Mawāriṭa fi Lubnān min al-Našʿa ḥatta al-Intidāb al-Faransī* (*An Analytical Study of the History of the Maronites in Lebanon from its Foundation until the French Mandate*) (Ḥadaṭ-Bʿabda: Manšūrāt al-Ġāmiʿa al-Antūniyya /Université Antonine, 2008).

²⁰⁴ Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*. (London: Faber & Faber 1991) 97.

inclusive of the Eastern region that spreads from Armenia to Egypt. It took them a few years before they managed to raise enough funds to establish a Jesuit residence and a college in the heart of Beirut, near Sāḥat al-Burğ (known today as Martyr Square). In 1843, they acquired land in Ġazīr (in Mount Lebanon, north of Beirut) where they finally set up an 'oriental' seminary and an elementary school. In 1855, a secondary level school was added to the complex. In the beginning they relied on the printing presses of the Maronites and the Melchites in Šwayr to produce textbooks for their schools, but in 1848, they received from Lyon a rudimentary lithographic press that was set up in the Jesuit residence in Beirut, which they used for producing catechisms and textbooks for their students. This was the precursor for the later Imprimerie Catholique in Beirut.²⁰⁵ "The Jesuits were the formidable rivals of the Americans. Since their arrival in Syria in 1831, they had built a chapel in Beirut and opened a day school under native teachers where, in addition to Arabic, French and Italian were taught."²⁰⁶ They offered a wide range of liberal arts education and their Catholic Sisters of Charity were qualified and took great responsibility for female education in Syria (Lebanon) "and with such resources, that no single missionary society could rival them."²⁰⁷

The Jesuits in Lebanon kept a thorough chronicling of their activities and published some seminal books on their work. Especially of concern here are the books on printing in the Arab Middle East by Fr. Louis Cheikho (Luwīs Šayḥū. 1859–1927), which became the most referenced on the topic. Although their original mission to counter the Protestants' influence changed over time, especially when they exceeded their rivals in the domain of fine book publishing, their commitment to education and to Arab literary and intellectual traditions remained strong. The Imprimerie Catholique's long service (exceeding the American Press by some 40 years), and its ultimate split into a printing press, a publishing house (Dār al-Mašriq) and a distribution company (Librairie Orientale), makes it a unique case study. Its publishing of educational Arabic textbooks (literary classics, dictionaries and journals) made it a role model for scholarly publishers in the Middle East and was a motivational force in raising the quality of book design and printing in the Arabic language in the Arab world.

²⁰⁵ Bernard Delpal, "L'Imprimerie Catholique et la Bibliothèque Orientale à Beirut," *Les jésuites à Lyon, XVIe – XXe siècle*. Ed. Etienne Fouilloux, Bernard Hours (Lyon: ENS Éditions, 2005) 162–163.

²⁰⁶ Tibawi, 118–19.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. Tibawi, 118–19.

1.3.2. Origin and chronological developments

1.3.2.1. 1848—1859: first steps towards establishing the press

The Imprimerie Catholique (originally known as the Jesuit Press) made its humble beginning in October 1848, when it was set up in the Jesuit residence in Beirut, with a basic lithographic press sent as a donation from Fr. Julien Jordan, head of the provincial mission in Lyon. This first press was an autographic copying press,²⁰⁸ which was used until 1852 to reproduce catechisms and textbooks.²⁰⁹ It was soon followed by a binding department with equipment such as a paper press, cutting and binding machines constructed by the Italian Br. Ferdinand Bonacina (1804–1860). The press was run by Fr. Jean Brun (1814–1867) under the supervision of Fr. Jean Billotet (1812–1860),²¹⁰ head of the Beirut mission.²¹¹ However, it became clear that this small press would not be adequate to deal with the quantity of textbooks needed for their schools.²¹²

In 1853, on his return from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the Count M. de Trémond passed by Beirut and met with the head of the mission, Fr. Billotet, who urged on the Count the need for establishing a proper ‘Arabic’ Catholic printing press that would rival that of the American Protestant Missionaries, and that would help spread the true Catholic faith amongst eastern Christians and expand their thinking through literary and scientific education. Convinced, the Count M. de Trémond donated 6000 Francs to the Jesuits thus allowing them to set up a fully equipped printing press, on the condition that they print and distribute freely among the population the book *Kitāb al-Iqtidā’ bil-Masīḥ* (*The Imitation of Christ*) by Thomas à Kempis (1380–1471).²¹³ The Jesuits refer to 1853 as the official date of the establishment of the Imprimerie Catholique.²¹⁴ In the beginning of 1854, the Jesuits imported a typographic hand-press from Paris, and as promised printed the book, *Kitāb al-Iqtidā’ bil-Masīḥ*, which was published in 2000 copies, with Arabic types imported from Paris. This was followed in the same year by a number of mostly

²⁰⁸ The Autographic Press is a small portable lithographic press. The subject to be printed is transferred from paper to the surface of a polished metallic plate. The plate is then inked and the paper on which it is to be printed is placed upon it. A tympan is laid down over the paper and a wooden scraper with a sharp edge is passed over it by hand, transferring a perfect impression onto the paper. The utility of such a simple application of the lithographic principle was particularly economic and convenient for the reproduction of complex handwritten Arabic texts.

²⁰⁹ *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, Imprimerie Catholique exhibition catalog. (Beirut: 1983) 1.

²¹⁰ Father Edouard Billotet: born in 1812 in Haute-Saône (France), died in 1860 in Zaḥla (Lebanon). He was head of the Catholic Mission from 1850–1859. He left for Beirut in 1845 and adopted the name for the rest of his life of Abūna Hanna (Father John or Jean). He is considered the founder of the Imprimerie Catholique, and its first director. He perished in Zaḥla in the massacres of the Lebanese civil war in 1860. See Rafael Herzstein, *Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation*, Volume 24, Number 1, Spring 2012 (Ottawa: CSSE, Canadian Society for the Study of Education, 2012) 74. Henri Jalabert, *Jésuites au Proche-Orient: notices biographiques* (Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1987) 8.

²¹¹ Op. cit. Cheikho, 56. Nasrallah. 52.

²¹² Op. cit. Šābāt, 50–51.

²¹³ Op. cit. Cheikho, 57

²¹⁴ Ibid. *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, 1.

religious books such as *Mabādi' al-Qirā'a* (*The Principles of Reading*), *Mazāmīr 'Ashā' al-Aḥad* (*The Psalms of the the Sunday Supper*), *Fard al-Aḥawiyāt* (*The Duty of Brotherhood*), and *Kitāb al-Ṣalawāt* (*The Book of Prayers*). As for the first lithographic press, it was sent to the Jesuit seminary in Ġazīr (north of Beirut) where it was used to print Arabic literature books.²¹⁵ Under the direction of its tireless director Fr. J. Billotet and his able assistant Br. Antoine Tallon (1816–1888, who had experience in the printing arts in Lyon before joining the Jesuit order, and who was in charge of the press from 1861-1887),²¹⁶ the press received more attention and the demand for its publications grew, which required an improvement of its printing facilities. In 1855, the press was fitted with Latin types and in that year it printed its first bilingual book *Mabādi' Ta'lim al-Luġa al-Faransiyya* (*Principles of Teaching the French Language*), then the following year in 1856 it printed the French dictionary by Br. Joseph Heury (1842–1897),²¹⁷ *Muḡam al-Luġa al-Faransiyya* (*The Dictionary of the French Language*).²¹⁸ As a result of its success and growing reputation, the Imprimerie Catholique received a second press in 1856, donated by the Association for Eastern Schools in Paris.²¹⁹ With two presses in their possession, the Imprimerie Catholique managed to print about 350 000 copies of 30 titles.²²⁰ Towards the end of 1857, Fr. J. Billotet was transferred as director of the Jesuit monastery in Zaḥla (in the Biqā' valley), and the management of the press was entrusted to Fr. Joseph Heury who was director for two years until the end of 1859. He was then succeeded by Fr. Philippe Cuche (1818–1895),²²¹ then Fr. Henri de Prunières (1821–1872) in 1861, then Fr. Louis-Xavier Abougit (1819–

²¹⁵ Op. cit. Cheikho, 57. Nasrallah, 52.

²¹⁶ Br. Antoine Tallon (born in 1816 in Lyon, Jesuit in 1838, and dying in 1888 in Beirut). He arrived in Beirut in 1853, and was assigned the charge of the small press (founded in 1852) upon his arrival. However, he was not listed in the catalogue as 'printer' until 1861-1887.⁷⁴ It believed that Br. Tallon had previous experience with the printing profession in Lyon before joining the Jesuit order. He ran the press with the help of a Lebanese technician by the name of As'ad al-Ḥūrī. Op. cit. Jalabert, 60.

²¹⁷ Father Joseph Heury: born in 1824 in Avignon, Jesuit in 1842, died in 1897 in Zaḥla. He was sent as a professor to teach philosophy and mathematics at the college in Ġazīr (1851–1852). Alone he undertook the teaching of moral theology in Beirut (1852–1853), and then with the help of the graduates of the Ġazīr seminary (1853–1854), while at the same time studying the Arabic language. He became in charge of the Imprimerie Catholique for one year from 1860-1861, and was succeeded briefly by Fr. Cuche in this position. He spent his last year in Zaḥla, first as head of the mission there (1890–1893), then as a spiritual father. He is credited with the writing of the first French-Arabic dictionary printed in the Middle East, *Muḡam al-Luġa al-Faransiyya* (1856), which was a great contribution to the reputation of the Press and a factor in its further expansion and development. Op. cit. Jalabert, 99. Herzstein, 30. Ṣābāt, 52.

²¹⁸ Op. cit. Cheikho, 58.

²¹⁹ Cheikho refers to this establishment as *Šarikat al-Madāris al-Šarqiyya fi Bārīs*, which is possibly a reference to the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) (National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations), founded in 1795 after the French revolution with a mission to teach living Oriental languages "of recognized utility for politics and commerce." It grew steadily throughout the nineteenth century and was associated with the Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle (Paris III). Ibid. Cheikho, 58.

²²⁰ Op. cit. Ṣābāt, 52.

²²¹ Father Philippe Cuche: born in 1818 in Doubs, Jesuit in 1843, died in 1895 in Bikfayya. He was the Vice-Rector of Ġazīr (1858–1861), and founder of the Residences of Aleppo (1873) and of Homs (1882). He wrote well in Arabic and was the director of the periodical *al-Bašīr* in 1877 and 1881. He was briefly assigned the direction of the Imprimerie Catholique in 1861, to be then succeeded by Fr. Henry de Prunière. He is renowned for his bilingual Arabic-French dictionary of 1862. He was the Head of the Residences of Bikfayya from 1892 until his death in 1895. Op. cit. Jalabert, 50, Herzstein, 39.

1895) in 1863, then Fr. Louis Fenech (1823–1868) in 1867, then Fr. Jean-Baptiste Belot (1822–1904)²²² in 1868 who was director for 30 years (until 1888) before being succeeded by Fr. Pierre-Claver Mourcou (d. 1937).²²³ The relationship of the Imprimerie Catholique to the Ottoman State was relatively good. Under the *Tanzīmāt* constitutional reforms between 1839–76, when the law issued in 1857 gave permission for private publishers and printers to operate (with the *Serbesti-i Kürşad Nizamnamesi*, or the free publishing regulations), the Imprimerie Catholique automatically received its license and permission to continue its work.²²⁴

1.3.2.2. *Between the 1860 Lebanese sectarian conflict and World War I: the growth and professionalization of the press*

After the Lebanese sectarian conflict of 1860, the Imprimerie Catholique was moved to a building specially built for it in the premises of the old Jesuit monastery in the Şayfi area of Beirut. It was then furnished with an additional third press, a guillotine for cutting paper and a machine for sharpening its knife.²²⁵ The number of staff increased to include 40 staff members. The growing number of schools in Lebanon and therefore the increasing demand for scholastic books and publications created the need to expand the production of the press. In 1864, the director of the Jesuit mission, Fr. François-Xavier Gautrelet (1807–1886), understood the need to expand and upgraded the equipment of the press to help the mission achieve its educational and cultural goals. In 1865, it received Arabic matrices from Paris that were used for casting the metal types in-house.²²⁶ In 1867, a new 3-horsepower steam-powered press arrived from Europe.²²⁷ This engine was used until 1878 until it was upgraded to a 7-horsepower engine which was used for 20 years before it was upgraded again to a 12-horsepower engine. In its new location, in 1869 the Imprimerie Catholique published its first newspaper printed on the new steam-powered presses, *Al-Mağma‘ al-Fātikānī* (*The Vatican Council*). It appeared for a year until it was replaced by the religious

²²² Father Jean-Baptiste Belot: born in Lux (Saône-et-Loire, France), Jesuit in 1842, died in 1904 in Beirut (Lebanon). He arrived in the Middle East in 1865, and became director of the Imprimerie Catholique from 1868 to 1898 (and responsible only for Arabic publications between 1898–1904). He was assisted by Brother Marie-Elias who managed the workshops. Under his direction, he gave the Imprimerie Catholique its major developments and progress, and supervised the production of its renowned and luxurious 1876-1879 Arabic Bible (in three volumes). He was author of some twenty titles in Arabic, some original works and others translations on spiritual and theological topics (such as the bible for children, in three volumes). He is equally author of two dictionaries: a bilingual Arabic-French dictionary *al-Farā'id al-Durriyya fi al-Luġatayn al-'Arabiyya wa al-Faransīyya* (1883, 1888, 1893, 1896, 1898, 1900), a French-Arabic dictionary *Dictionnaire français-arabe* (1890), and an abridged version *Belot Classique: Petit Dictionnaire Français-Arabe Illustré* (1892). He was the founder of the first Catholic journal in the Arabic language, *al-Bašīr* (1870–1900). Op. cit. Jalabert, 81. Herzstein, 39.

²²³ Op. cit. Cheikho, 58. Nasrallah, 53.

²²⁴ Op. cit. Šābāt, 53.

²²⁵ Op. cit. Cheikho, 58–59.

²²⁶ Huda Smitshuijzen-AbiFares, *Arabic Typography : A comprehensive Sourcebook* (London: Saqi Books. 2001) 70.

²²⁷ Op. cit. *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, 1.

Catholic newspaper *al-Bašīr* in 1870.²²⁸ When Fr. Ambroise Monnot (1831–1898)²²⁹ succeeded Fr. F. X. Gautrelet as head of the mission in 1869, he worked on further improving the printing press, calling it the “great messenger and the public missionary.”²³⁰ He worked under difficult postwar conditions to acquire new equipment for the press: for engraving, type casting, carton-making, gilding and bookbinding, as well as a double-sided printing press among many other machines, making the Imprimerie Catholique the first press in the Middle East to be equipped in a similar fashion to European printing presses.

The year 1875 is a special one for the Jesuits in Beirut: with funds collected through his fundraising travels in the US and Lyon, Fr. A. Monnot managed to buy land in Beirut in the Şayfi area, at the foothills of Aşrafiyya. Between 1870–1875 he succeeded in constructing new buildings to house the Oriental Seminary (which was moved from Ġazīr to the new premises in 1875), a new church, new residences, and the secondary school of Ġazīr. The latter was housed in much larger buildings that allowed for an adjoining library (which later became the reputed Bibliothèque Orientale). The collection of the library was originally mostly on archaeology meticulously built up by Fr. Alexandre Bourquenoud (1824–1868), in the seminary of Ġazīr. After the move to Beirut in 1875, and its coming under the charge of Fr. Louis Cheikho from 1880 until his death in 1927, the library grew into an independent research center on Oriental Studies. The Bibliothèque Orientale’s collection of Arabic classics and Orientalist publications in both manuscript and printed book forms continued to be steadily expanded and updated.²³¹ In 1875 the Université Saint Joseph (USJ) was also founded.²³² It received its accreditation and title as Pontifical University by Pope Leo XIII in 1881.²³³

Under the direction of Fr. Philibert Bernadet (1846–1896), the Imprimerie Catholique was also moved in 1875 to its new building, specially built for the press, near the Université Saint-Joseph. That year the photographic department was established, and the press acquired a large lithographic press and photolithographic facilities, that eventually allowed for the printing of the

²²⁸ Op. cit. Şābāt, 52. Cheikho, 59.

²²⁹ Father Ambroise Monnot: born in 1831, Jesuit in 1846, died in 1898 in Lyon (France). He was head of the ‘Mission to Syria’ from 1869 to 1876. He was the founder of the Université Saint-Joseph (USJ). He was behind the creation of the periodical *al-Bašīr*, and the famous Arabic Catholic Bible of 1876. He contributed to the further developments and improvements of the Imprimerie Catholique, making it the first press in the Middle East to be equipped in similar ways to European printing presses. He became the ‘Provincial de Lyon’ from 1877 to 1883, and procurator of the Province and the Mission from 1883 to 1896.⁷⁸ His founding of the Jesuit university and its influence on intellectual life in Beirut and then further afield, earned him the respect of the community. Consequently the street adjacent to the Jesuit campus was officially named after him, officially designated as Rue Monnot. Op. cit. Jalabert, 26. Herzstein, 39.

²³⁰ Op. cit. Cheikho, 61.

²³¹ Op. cit. Herzstein, 27–28.

²³² Op. cit. Delpal, 165.

²³³ Op. cit. Herzstein, 21–22.

pocket-size bible (published in 1897) by photographically reducing the typeset pages from the larger-size original bible. In addition, new presses were purchased from the US, and the font foundry and binding equipment were updated to speed up production and be more cost effective and less labor-intensive. By the end of the nineteenth century, the press was able to print in different languages (Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Armenian, Coptic, Turkish), in addition to European languages. Its staff increased to 80 members from 60 in 1881, and 30 in 1875.²³⁴ In 1881, through the quality of its production, the Imprimerie Catholique was honored with the title of greatest and most important press in the Levant. It had then a labor force of 60 skilled workers which increased to 80 the following year.²³⁵ The Imprimerie Catholique published books for renowned authors and professors of the Jesuit University (Université Saint-Joseph). In 1898, they released the journal *al-Mašriq*,²³⁶ which specializes in Oriental sciences, literature and arts, publishing studies on topics ranging from literature, heritage, religion and social studies.²³⁷

1.3.2.3. *Early twentieth century: World War I—World War II, survival and modernization*

The effects of World War I on Lebanon were devastating culturally, politically, economically and socially. The administrative independence was cancelled with Turkey entering the war as ally to the Germans. Most schools closed their doors, censorship of the press and publishers became extremely tight, and many presses closed down, or their work was considerably reduced. The Imprimerie Catholique's equipment was confiscated, and some newspaper owners and publishers were executed.²³⁸

On the eve of World War I, in 1914, the Imprimerie Catholique owned dozens of different kinds of printing and binding equipment, as well as a wide range of printing types in several languages and sizes.²³⁹ Since the Imprimerie Catholique was considered a French institution, it was confiscated by the Ottoman authorities and its operations were halted.²⁴⁰ During the war the press was pillaged and lost all except one of its largest printing presses (because it was too big for the Turkish authorities to take away to Istanbul). Its manager (Br. Māhir) and staff members managed

²³⁴ Op. cit. *Šābāt*, 62. Cheikho, 61–2.

²³⁵ Op. cit. *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, 1.

²³⁶ Ibid. *Šābāt*, 62. Cheikho, 61–2.

²³⁷ *Mağallat al-Mašriq* is still published to this day by Dār al-Mašriq in Beirut, and appears biannually. It has published the works of renowned Arab intellectuals such Louis Cheikho, Ibrāhīm al-Yāziḡī, Fu'ād Ifrām al-Bustānī, Sa'id 'Aql, and many others.

²³⁸ Op. cit. *Šābāt*, 71–72.

²³⁹ Ibid. *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, 1.

²⁴⁰ Op. cit. *Šābāt*, 62. Cheikho, 63.

to hide its collection of matrices and smaller photographic equipment and save them from getting confiscated.²⁴¹

After World War I there was a revival of cultural and economic activities in Beirut. Under the French Mandate system (1923–1946)²⁴² the number of French publications grew. The immigration of Armenians to Lebanon brought a new impetus to the printing industry;²⁴³ many Armenians joined the labor force working in the printing industry. There was a growth in commercial publications with the increase in printed playbills, advertisements and such. Both the Imprimerie Catholique and the American Press returned to their operations, updating their establishments with newer machines imported from Europe. The Imprimerie Catholique went back into operation, with a third of its original staff, operating on manual hand-presses (since its steam-powered presses were lost). Eventually, they managed to buy a petrol-operated engine that they used until 1930, when they finally replaced all their presses with electrical ones. With the passing of the years, the Imprimerie Catholique's productivity increased and the newspaper *al-Mašriq* began to appear again in 1920. In 1925 the Imprimerie Catholique celebrated its 75th anniversary.²⁴⁴

The Imprimerie Catholique was one of the most important and active publishers in the Arab Middle East. It was well equipped to undertake complex tasks and projects. Its most important specializations (well into the 1960s) was the publishing of Arabic literary works. Its publications covered textbooks, literary and scientific works, religious texts, and commercial printing of all kinds. It became an international source for Orientalist publications. It also printed value papers, postal stamps and passports. It began its offset printing in 1935, then expanded to a 2-color offset press in 1945, and a third press in 1950 that they sometimes used for four-color printing. They started their typesetting internally when they purchased from Egypt four used Linotype typesetters in 1942.²⁴⁵ In 1945, a new wing of four floors was added to the old building in Huvelin Street in Beirut, and its personnel of technicians and well-trained workmen reached approximately one hundred and forty employees.²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ Op. cit. *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, 1–2. Šābāt, 73.

²⁴² Cf. Peter Sluglett. "The Mandate System: High Ideals, Illiberal Practices" in Christoph Schumann. ed. *Liberal thought in the Eastern Mediterranean*. Leiden: Brill, 2008. pp. 29–49

²⁴³ Ibid. Šābāt, 73.

²⁴⁴ Ibid. Šābāt, 73.

²⁴⁵ Op. cit. Šābāt, 83.

²⁴⁶ Op. cit. *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, 2.

1.3.2.4. *Mid to late twentieth century: dividing the press into smaller independent institutions*

From the 1950s, the Imprimerie Catholique suffered from competition with local publishers that were putting out cheaper books.²⁴⁷ In 1951, the directors of the Press decided that the costs no longer justified having an internal Oriental Type Foundry—which had been part of the press since 1854,²⁴⁸ and under the direction of the punchcutter P.J. Antoine ‘Abdallāh until 1923.²⁴⁹ The Oriental Type Foundry remained in operation producing and selling printing types to others until 1954-56. In 1956, it was sold to Ḥasīb Dirġām, and as compensation for his years of service with the Catholique Press, he was to operate it on their premises for a limited period. Thereafter, the Oriental Foundry, commonly known as *Masbak al-Ḥurūf*, became an independent foundry catering to various printers and clients.²⁵⁰ In 1959, the foundry was divided into shares and Mr. Hagop Yalankedjian and Mr. Gabriel Fatteh (Fatta) became shareholders and partners in the foundry, but most of the shares remained with Mr. Dirġām until the foundry was sold to a Spanish typesetter in 1970.²⁵¹ The Oriental Type Foundry became the reference for a rich collection of printing types in several scripts, styles and sizes, and eventually upgraded to machine engraving of punches thus adding approximately thirty new fonts to the old collection in addition to various mathematical symbols and other sorts.²⁵² Ḥasīb Dirġām’s sons moved to Muḥalliṣ where they established *Ḥasīb Dirġām Sons*, later changing its name to *Dirġām Graphics*. This company was run by sons Sāmi (the technician) and Nadīm (the designer).²⁵³ Their original operation as a font foundry casting Arabic and Latin types evolved in the 1970s (before the advent of personal computers) into digitizing Arabic fonts for imagesetters and laser printers. The company has become a representative of graphic arts suppliers for machinery and consumables.²⁵⁴

In 1956, the plate-making and photographic facilities, under the supervision of Mr. Leon Terzian and Georges Margossian (the specialist in photoengraving and color separation), also became an independent company separate from the Imprimerie Catholique. This company was

²⁴⁷ Op. cit. Šābāt, 83.

²⁴⁸ Kortbawi, John. Art Director of the Imprimerie Catholique (1977–1988). Interview: Beirut, 15 December 2012. Appendix II. Dirġām, Ḥasīb. “Ḥasīb Dirġām, Taṭwīr al-Ḥarf al-‘Arabi. Al-Ṭaqāfa Mudīna lil-Wasā’il al-Mādiyya wa al-Faniyya (Ḥasīb Dirġām, The progress of Arabic Type. Culture is indebted to the physical and artistic means),” *Al-Ḥayāt* newspaper undated. PDF.

²⁴⁹ Ibid. Dirġām, *Al-Ḥayāt*.

²⁵⁰ Ibid. Dirġām, *Al-Ḥayāt*. It has not been possible to obtain the name of the Spanish typesetter from the surviving heirs of Ḥasīb Dirġām.

²⁵¹ Kortbawi. Appendix II. The name of the Spanish typesetter remains unknown since the surviving heirs of Dirġām could not recall it or produce any documents of the sales transaction to corroborate this fact.

²⁵² Ibid. Dirġām, *Al-Ḥayāt*.

²⁵³ Op. cit. Kortbawi. Appendix II.

²⁵⁴ SOLNA, “New Solna representative in the Middle East,” *News Events* 30 October 2008.

founded by Mr. Leon Terzian, and operated under the name *Leogravure*. It was originally set up as a letterpress engraving and platemaking company and then evolved with the developments in printing technologies “to become one of Lebanon’s leading digital prepress companies.”²⁵⁵

Leogravure remains in operation to this day as a prepress company, owned and run by Mr. Terzian’s sons and family.

The Imprimerie Catholique in the 1960s continued with its work producing fine print and quality publications. It had six presses, two 2-color and four 1-color presses. In their typesetting department, they had a Monotype machine. In 1960 the staff numbered 120 personnel and in 1966 their number reached 161 (including directors and managers, technicians, correctors and authors). Its most important publishing contributions were its Arabic, French, English, and Syriac dictionaries, which totaled 16 dictionaries and some encyclopedic and scientific series. With the booming of the educational publications being produced for the Arab Gulf states at that time, the Imprimerie Catholique began printing for and doing business with the developing Muslim states. Therefore, its management thought it commercially wise to change their name to a less religious-sounding one, and so it started publishing books under the new secular name, Dār al-Mašriq, which became the official name of their publishing house from 1967 onwards.²⁵⁶

In the 1960s, the competition of publishing houses and presses that were producing cheaper books was growing. In order to support themselves—and in addition to their specialization of book printing and publishing of dictionaries and textbooks—the Imprimerie Catholique started printing commercially for other clients. This displeased Rome, and Fr. Paul Brouwers (the last director of the press) was sent in 1968 with the purpose of selling and closing down the press. The Jesuits did not want to own a commercial printing press, they wanted to concentrate only on publishing. Once Fr. P. Brouwers arrived, he realized that this was not a simple operation: “the printing press was not an independent legal entity but a part of the whole Society of Jesus.”²⁵⁷ What he first needed to do was to establish the Imprimerie Catholique as an independent legal entity (a *Société Anonyme*, *SAL*) with the intention of selling it. This eventually led to the breaking up of the institution in 1980 into independent entities: a printing press (Imprimerie Catholique), a publishing house (Dār al-Mašriq), and a distribution company (Librairie Orientale). “By that time there was no one interested in buying a printing press in Ḍahr al-Waḥš (in ‘Arayya), so they couldn’t sell the printing press.”²⁵⁸ A new building was built for the press in the mountains in 1974 and

²⁵⁵ LEOGRAVURE S.A.L. 6 October 2013. Company website.

²⁵⁶ Op. cit. Šābāt, 92.

²⁵⁷ Paul Brouwers, S.J. Director of the Imprimerie Catholique (1968—1988). Interview: Jesuit Residences, Beirut: 11 December 2012. Appendix II.

²⁵⁸ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

delivered in 1978. This unfortunately coincided with the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990) and so the move to the new premises was postponed. The reason for moving from the Rue Huvelin, was because they needed to free the site for legal and financial reasons. In 1980, the Beirut grounds of the Imprimerie Catholique were sold, and in 1981 the press moved to the new location in Ḍahr al-Waḥš, but the smaller presses for printing value papers and stamps remained behind in Beirut (for the convenience of their Lebanese governmental clients). The press remained operational in its last location until 1990.²⁵⁹ In 1990, during the war between General 'Awn and the Syrian Army, the press was pillaged, the building burned, the books turned to ashes and the printing types were dispersed and lost. The old lead printing types were moved to the new location along with other material. Unfortunately these historical printing types were all lost during this war. They could not carry away the metal printing types and could not use them, so they threw them out of their boxes and got them irreparably mixed up. It was impossible to reorganize them after that, and so they were wasted. Before moving to the mountains they had started digitizing the fonts, and so the Syriac fonts were already partially digitized, but the work was never completed.²⁶⁰

1.3.2.5. *End of the twentieth century: the end of the Imprimerie Catholique*

The Imprimerie Catholique was finally sold to the Lebanese Army in 2000, who used the printing facilities to print their own institutional publications.²⁶¹ This date marks the official closing of the Imprimerie Catholique and the end of its long service to intellectual life in the Middle East. Its old premises next to the old Jesuit College (now the Université Saint Joseph) on Rue Huvelin in Beirut, remains empty. In 2000, Université Saint Joseph founded on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the University, its academic Université Saint Joseph Presses (PUSJ) that specializes in topics ranging from economics, history, sociology, psychology and anthropology among others. In its 144-year existence, the Imprimerie Catholique produced several institutions that remain operational to this day, continuing the educational publishing and book printing first set in motion by the Jesuit fathers in 1847.

²⁵⁹ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

²⁶⁰ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

²⁶¹ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

1.3.3. Program and ideology

1.3.3.1. *The intentions gleaned from their own writings.*

The Jesuits had four main objectives for their mission in the Middle East, as can be gleaned from their own declarations and writings. First they aimed to create a Catholic defense against Protestant propaganda in the Middle East. Second, they wanted to develop a true apostolate amongst Eastern Christians. Third, they strove to become the main source of scholarship on 'Orientalist studies' (*Orientalisme*). Fourth, they wished to bring to this part of the East the glory of French culture and civilization, affirming the historical responsibility of France as a protective power of Christians in the Muslim/Arab region.²⁶²

The French-funded Catholic mission was responsible for the dissemination of French culture and language in Syria and the Eastern Mediterranean. They taught (in) French at their schools and seminaries. They opened a French university to prevent students from the Catholic faith attending the American Protestant university, and to rival them with medical and pharmacy faculties of their own. However, their most prized (locally and internationally) was their liberal arts faculty (*Faculté des Lettres*) and their Oriental Studies research center, where they offered not only French literary courses but also Arabic language and literature courses to both native and European students (some coming from countries like Germany, Austria, France, Belgium, Italy and Spain).

1.3.3.2. *The printing press and publishing were central to the Jesuit's religious and political mission*

In celebration of their centennial anniversary, the Jesuits published in two volumes some twenty fascicules that presented their main achievements over the past century. This publication entitled *Les jésuites en Syrie, 1831-1931, Université Saint-Joseph* (Paris: Dillen, 1931. 12 vols.) was circulated in Paris during the colonial exhibition in 1931. In the second volume, some parts were dedicated to *La presse* (the press), *Les études orientales* (oriental studies), and *La bibliothèque orientale* (the oriental library). In the section on the *bibliothèque orientale* they clearly state their view of the importance of the Imprimerie Catholique in Beirut in furthering and promoting their mission in the Middle East.²⁶³ The section ends with the following text:

"the Imprimerie Catholique is one of the most important of mission presses. At the heart of this mission [the Jesuit mission to Beirut] for which this year [1931] marks its centennial anniversary, it has been a powerful and an indispensable collaborator, in its double apostolate, the direct and the pedagogical. It is in part due to it [the Imprimerie Catholique], and to the propagation of civilizing

²⁶² Op. cit. Delpal, 162.

²⁶³ Op. cit. Delpal, 161.

ideas of the Christian and French world, that the Mandate Power in Syria owes the place [status] that it does in this country [Syria]. One should not forget it [the Imprimerie Catholique] in this year when Paris displays to the eyes of a public coming from all four corners of the globe the tangible results of its global mission.”²⁶⁴

Also in the text on the history of the Imprimerie Catholique, Fr. Ambroise Monnot is quoted as saying that “the Imprimerie Catholique is the greatest apostle of Jesuit mission.”²⁶⁵

The Jesuits in this text present clearly their political affiliation with the French state and its global (colonial) mission. Through their connection to the local Catholic communities, they facilitated the French involvement into the post-WWI Ottoman Empire, and the state’s support for their work was clearly politically motivated. They saw the press as a tool for their mission of cultural intermediary between European civilization and the indigenous cultures of the Middle East. They also saw themselves and the French as protectors of both European Christians in the East as well as native Eastern Christians.²⁶⁶

1.3.3.3. *The editorial selection of books produced*

It is not surprising that a mission that set out to build a barrier against the spread of Protestantism in the Middle East would adopt similar tactics as those of the Protestant missionaries, and eventually beat them at their own game. The book, and consequently the printing press, have been fundamental to the Catholics’ spiritual, political and educational goals. Their publishing was central to all their activities leaving lasting effects on intellectual life in Lebanon and beyond across the rest of the Arab world.

The Imprimerie Catholique held its central position at the Jesuit mission through the type of publications it was producing.²⁶⁷ It started by publishing simple religious texts starting with *Kitāb al-Iqtidā’ bi al-Masīḥ* (*The Imitation of Christ*) by Thomas à Kempis. It progressed towards producing finely printed books such as the bible in three volumes (1876, 1878, 1879) for which it received a golden medal for excellence in design and printing.²⁶⁸ Nonetheless, the press went

²⁶⁴ Original text in French: “[...] l’imprimerie catholique de Beyrouth est l’une des plus importantes de toutes les imprimeries de mission. Au sein de cette mission dont l’année présente marque le centenaire, elle a été sa collaboratrice puissante et indispensable, dans son double apostolat direct et pédagogique. C’est en partie à elle, à la diffusion des idées civilisatrices du monde chrétien et français, que la Puissance mandataire en Syrie doit la place qu’elle occupe dans ce pays. On ne saurait l’oublier en cette année où Paris met sous les yeux d’un public accouru des quatre coins du globe le résultat tangible de sa Mission mondiale.”

Cf. Université Saint-Joseph. *Les Jésuites en Syrie - 1831-1931*. 12 volumes in-4° (Paris: Les éditions Dillen, 1931) 70–1. Cf. Du Mesnil Du Buisson Comte. *Les Jésuites en Syrie, 1831-1931*. Université Saint-Joseph. Douze plaquettes, in-8°. In: *Syria*. Tome 13 fascicule 1, 1932. pp.105-107. PDF.

²⁶⁵ Op. cit. Delpal, 161.

²⁶⁶ Op. cit. Delpal, 162.

²⁶⁷ Op. cit. Delpal, 169.

²⁶⁸ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

further in fulfilling the mission's goals by publishing and distributing erudite works dedicated to Arab civilization, as well as information about the Roman Catholic faith. It represented by this the Jesuit mission's ambition to act as intermediary between Europe and the Arab world, and to encourage exchange within the Middle East itself.²⁶⁹ This can be deduced from the topics and types of books they chose to publish and the way they designed and presented them.

1.3.4. Influence and cultural legacy

The Imprimerie Catholique was one of the major institutions responsible for the propagation of erudite Arabic classics and Arab literary heritage. In their selection of publications and their bilingual dictionaries, they not only helped revive classical Arabic literature in the Arab Middle East, but they also introduced Arab culture to European scholars, and thus forged a better understanding and cultural exchange between the Christian West and the Arab East. They maintained their role as dedicated educators that upheld the oriental traditions while bringing a subtle modernity shaped along the French model. They felt rooted in the Orient and wanted to defend its traditional culture. Their quest for preserving in printed form the Arabic classics was considered by some European scholars as an obstacle to using the new printed book medium to forge 'new modes of thought.'²⁷⁰ The trend to publish early Arabic literature stems from a traditionalist way of thinking; "thus bringing about the curious situation in which book printing, although an important instrument in breaking the ground for a new Muslim cultural reform, has simultaneously effected a renaissance of the Islamic literature of the past."²⁷¹ What is perceived here by Pedersen as a weakness and a propagation of conventionalism and old traditional values, can also be read differently as a political defense in the face of ever-encroaching European dominance. These books being transferred to the new technology was a means to ensure their survival for later generations, so that they may build upon this cultural heritage and help evolve it into new modern thought and language. The Arab Academies in Damascus and in Cairo were precisely the type of institutions set up for this purpose. Whether they have succeeded or not may have had other reasons than the publishing of older 'modes of thinking and texts'.

The Imprimerie Catholique, though publishing classics, chose to carefully select non-Islamic texts and to highlight works of Christian Arabs in an attempt to demonstrate and assert the rootedness of Christians in the predominantly Muslim Arab World. For example the series entitled *al-Turāṭ al-'Arabī al-Masīḥī* (*The Arab Christian Heritage*) of which some titles by Louis Cheikho

²⁶⁹ Op. cit. Delpal, 169.

²⁷⁰ Johannes Pedersen, *The Arabic book*. Transl. Geoffrey French. Introduction by Robert Hillenbrand, Ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984) 138.

²⁷¹ Ibid. Pedersen, 1984. 138.

that explicitly present the works of Christian Arabs, *al-naṣārīna*, (scholars, poets and scientists).²⁷² The Imprimerie Catholique did not only play an important role in contributing to 'modern' Arabic intellectual production, but they also strove to train the right teachers for further disseminating this knowledge.²⁷³ After the establishment of Lebanon as a sovereign state and its independence from the French Mandate government, they furnished the burgeoning Lebanese nation with its first leaders: heads of state, directors of governmental and educational institutions, and leading authors and intellectuals. Their most prized publications to this day remain their orientalist journal, *al-Mašriq* (*The East*), and their reputed series of Arabic and bilingual dictionaries.

1.3.5. Key and select publications

Through its publications, the Imprimerie Catholique played an intermediary and active role between French learning and the intellectual culture of the Arab world.²⁷⁴ In addition to religious texts and bibles, their secular publications included studies on Christian and Syriac heritage, on Christian-Muslim dialogue, literary classics and *dīwāns* (complete collections of a certain poet), chrestomathies and anthologies, works on history, geography, and archeology, and reference works (dictionaries, thesauruses, bibliographies, catalogues, and an encyclopedia).

1.3.5.1. The Arabic Catholic Bible (in three volumes, 1876, 1878, 1879)

The first publication of note that was published by the Imprimerie Catholique was the Catholic translation of the Bible into Arabic. The Catholic Arabic Bible²⁷⁵ was produced in 1876 under the auspices of the Jesuit fathers, directed by Fr. Augustin Rodet and revised and edited by

²⁷² Louis Cheikho's books include: *Kitāb al-Maḥṭūṭāt al-ʿArabiyya lil-Kataba al-Naṣrāniyya* (*The Books of Manuscripts by Arab Christian Copyists*, 1924); *Kitāb Šuʿarāʾ al-Naṣrāniyya* (*The Book of Arab Christian Poets*, 1890–1927); *Al-Naṣrāniyya wa-Ādābuhā Bayna ʿArab al-Ġāhiliyya* (*The Arab Christians and their Literature Amongst the Pre-Islamic Arabs*, 1912–1923); *Šuʿarāʾ al-Naṣrāniyya Baʿda al-Islām* (*The Arab Christian Poets after Islam*, 1924–1927); *ʿUlamāʾ al-Naṣrāniyya fī al-Islām, 622–1300* (*The Arab Christian Scientists in Islam, 622–1300*, with Kamil Ḥuṣayma, 1983); *Wuzarāʾ al-Naṣrāniyya wa-Kuttābuhā fī al-Islām, 622–1517* (*The Arab Christian Ministers and Writers in Islam, 622–1517*, with Kamil Ḥuṣayma, 1987); and *Šuʿarāʾ al-Naṣrāniyya Qabla al-Islām* (*The Arab Christian Poets before Islam*, Dār al-Mašriq, 1999).

²⁷³ Towards the end of World War I, a rising of national aspirations emerged throughout the Ottoman Empire. The Oriental studies faculty at the Université Saint-Joseph, with its renowned professors Henri Lammens (1862–1919), Louis Cheikho and Sébastien Ronzevalle (1865–1937), also played a role in the development of these ideas, favoring the creation of an independent 'Grand Liban' (or today's Lebanon), one that can mediate between European and Arab cultures. Some of its finest educated alumni were among the leaders that came to govern this new and independent nation 'with an Arab face,' as was referred to Lebanon in its constitution. Cf. Herzstein, 33.

²⁷⁴ Op. cit. Pedersen, 136.

²⁷⁵ The Protestant Bible is seven books shorter than the Catholic Bible. The Protestant Old Testament consists of 39 books, whereas the Catholic Old Testament includes seven additional books based on the Septuagint, a Greek translation of a different Hebrew canon. Both the Catholic and the Protestant Bibles use the same New Testament (as defined by Athanasius in 376). See Elesha Coffman, "Why are Protestant and Catholic Bibles different?", *Christian History*. <http://www.christianitytoday.com>. Last consulted: 2 March 2015.

Ibrāhīm al-Yāziḡī (1847–1906).²⁷⁶ As mentioned earlier, a special font was designed for typesetting it and the book won the gold medal for fine book design and printing at the world exhibition in Paris in 1878.²⁷⁷ The most important contribution of this bible was to garner more support for the Imprimerie Catholique and at the same time to help raise its profile and make it one of the key printers/publishers in Beirut and consequently the Middle East. This three-volume luxurious bible, though a typographic and design beauty, remained limited in distribution due to its size (weight) and expensive cost. It became “a bibliophile monument,” designed to impress, and was mostly addressed at an educated elite and the clergy.²⁷⁸ Later a simplified version was reproduced and widely disseminated. Its pages were photographically reduced from the larger original bible, with the ornamental borders and frames removed, to make it fit for a small pocket-size format and give the overall design a functional and humble look. Its second major contribution, with its newly designed font, was to propel the Imprimerie Catholique into becoming the primary source of Arabic fonts in the region. Its reputation and that of its Oriental Foundry soared towards the end of the nineteenth century and maintained its high standards well into the 1970s.

1.3.5.2. *Arabic literature and philology*

Next to its historical studies on Christianity, Christian doctrine and religious philosophy, the Imprimeries Catholique published academic books, namely on classical Arabic literature and philology—some of which are considered classics to this day. Examples include Arabic lexicographies and philologies published in 1885, the Arabic grammar (in two volumes) of Fr. Vernier published in 1899, and specimens of Arabic calligraphy (used as aids to writing and reading old manuscripts). Furthermore, many anthologies and chrestomathies for the study of the Arabic language were published in the Arabic language, and were quickly adopted elsewhere by schools in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria.²⁷⁹

However, the books of the Imprimerie Catholique were for a major part produced by the professors at the Faculty of Oriental Studies at the Univeristé Saint-Joseph (USJ), and mainly for their own schools. A great number of them were written or edited by Fr. Louis Cheikho—also the director of the Bibliothèque Orientale. He was the editor of the monthly journal *al-Mašriq*, which he founded in 1898 and directed until his death in 1927. He was a prolific writer and editor; his

²⁷⁶ Fouad E. Boustany, “Les Libanais et le Livre”, Aboussouan, Camille. Ed. *Le Livre et le Liban, jusqu'à 1900 (The Book and Lebanon until 1900)* (Paris: Unesco, 1982) 148.

²⁷⁷ Op. cit. Šābāt, 62. Nasrallah, 53.

²⁷⁸ Basile Aggoula, “Le Livre Libanais de 1585 à 1900”, Aboussouan, Camille. Ed. *Le Livre et le Liban, jusqu'à 1900 (The Book and Lebanon until 1900)* (Paris: Unesco, 1982) 310.

²⁷⁹ Op. cit. Herzstein, 32.

series on pre-Islamic and post-Islamic Arabic poetry are classics for the study of the Arabic and Oriental languages. Cheikho was born in 1859 in Mardīn, of an Assyrian (Chaldean Catholic) father and an Armenian mother. In 1868, Cheikho joined his brother to study at the Jesuit Seminary in Ġazīr (Lebanon). As a student, he studied both European and Semitic languages. The college in Ġazīr followed the same secular educational programs for regular students as for the ones studying to become priests. In 1874, he entered the Jesuit Order and started his novitiate training at Lons-le-Saunier in France. He was born Rizqallāh Cheikho, yet subsequently adopted the name 'Louis' out of devotion to the young Jesuit Saint Louis Gonzaga. In 1878, he returned to Lebanon and taught Arabic Literature at the Université Saint-Joseph for ten years, while at the same time continuing his studies of philosophy. In 1888, Cheikho travelled to Great Britain for theological studies in preparation for the priesthood, and was ordained priest on 8 September 1891. He then spent one year in Austria and another year in Paris, acquiring the European academic methodologies that helped him in his later work. In 1894, he settled in Beirut where he continued his academic career at Université Saint-Joseph, and became director of the Bibliothèque Orientale from 1880 until his death in 1927. As director, he developed the Bibliothèque Orientale further, expanding its collection of Oriental manuscripts and printed books, and building it into an internationally reputed research center for Oriental Studies. He wrote several books on the Arabic language, literature and history—of special interest is his study on the history of printing in the Middle East entitled *Tārīḥ Fann al-Ṭibāʿa fi al-Mašriq* (First appearing as a series of articles in *Al-Mašriq*, issue 3, since 1900. Collected and published by Dār al-Mašriq in 1995).²⁸⁰

Cheikho's most reputed work are the series *Mağānī al-Adab fi Ḥadā'iq al-ʿArab* (10 volumes with commentary and index, 1882–1929). They are noted in the Imprimerie Catholique's 1883 catalogue as “a living and authentic summary of the literary, political and moral history of the Arabs,”²⁸¹ and have become a classic for the study of Arabic literature. He also wrote books on vocabulary and philology;²⁸² on rhetoric and prosody;²⁸³ history books such as *Bayrūt Tārīḫuhā* (*Beirut's History*, 1925–1927), and popular literature such as the Arabic version of the fables of *Kalīla*

²⁸⁰ Julie Scott Meisami, Paul Starkey eds. *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature, Volume 2* (London: Routledge, 1988) 711. Herzstein, 27–33. Amīn Farṣūḥ, Hilāl Nātūt, Ġurğ Ṣadaqa (Amine Farchoukh, Hilal Natout, Georges Sadaka), eds. *Qarn Min al-Ṣaḥāfa fi Lubnān 1858–1958 / Cent Ans de La Presse Au Liban 1858–1958*. (Beirut: Al-Muʿassasa al-Lubnāniyya lil-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya / La Fondation Libanaise de la Bibliothèque Nationale, 2010) 213.

²⁸¹ Henri Jalabert, *L'Imprimerie catholique de Beyrouth, 1852–1966*. Beirut: 1967. p.136. Cf. Souarn, Romuald. *L'imprimerie catholique de Beyrouth et son œuvre en orient (1853-1903)*. In: *Échos d'Orient*, tome 7, n° 45, 1904. p. 127.

²⁸² Cheikho's books on vocabulary and philology include: *Kanz al-Ḥuffāz fi Kitāb Tahḍīb al-ʿAlfāz* (*The Treasure of the Reciters in the Book for the Refinement of Pronunciation*, of Ibn al-Sikkīt, edited by P.J. Louis Cheikho, 1896–1898); *Kitāb al-ʿAlfāz al-Kitābiyya* (*The Book of Written Articulations*, of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Hamadānī, edited by P.J. Louis Cheikho, 1885); and *Fiqh al-Luġa* (*The Jurisprudence of Language*, of al-Taʿālibī, edited by P.J. Louis Cheikho, 1885).

²⁸³ Cheikho's books on rhetoric and prosody include: *ʿIlm al-Adab: Maqālāt li-Mašāhīr al-ʿArab* (*The Art of Literature: Articles by the Famous Arabs*, 1886–1887).

wa-Dimna (1905–1922). He also published a catalogue on the historical manuscripts of the Bibliothèque Orientale of the Université Saint-Joseph (*Catalogue raisonné des manuscrits historiques de la bibliothèque orientale de l'université Saint-Joseph*, 1913).

1.3.5.3. *The Arabic and Bilingual Dictionaries*

The Imprimerie Catholique (and later Dār al-Mašriq) are reputed for their modern Arabic and bilingual dictionaries and reference works. Their bilingual dictionaries were a reliable tools for teaching the English and French languages. Their first Arabic-French vocabulary book by Fr. Cuhe's dates back to 1862. It was later followed by several dictionaries,²⁸⁴ such as the illustrated Classical Arabic Dictionary: *Al-Munğid al-Tārīhī* by Fr. Luwīs Ma'lūf (Louis Maalouf, 1908). Many variations on this *Munğid* series of Arabic dictionaries are published to this day.²⁸⁵ These books are extremely successful and are distributed all over the world.

1.3.5.4. *The Encyclopedia*

Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif, Qāmūs 'Āmm li-Kull Fann wa-Maṭlab (Vol.1, 1956– Vol. 15, 1996)

The Imprimerie Catholique published and printed an ambitious encyclopedia series, by another Bustānī, which like its predecessor was never completed—and in 15 volumes did not go further than the letter *hamza* (or *alif*). The series was initiated and edited by Fu'ād Ifrām al-Bustānī (Fouad Efrem Bustany, 1904–1994) who attempted to revive the Arabic encyclopedia project of his forebears (Buṭrus al-Bustānī and his son Salīm) with a new edition of *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif: Qāmūs 'Āmm li-Kull Fann wa-Maṭlab*.²⁸⁶ In an interview in the *Lewiston Daily Sun* (Aug. 21, 1973) he states his purpose of reviving what according to BustānīBustānī, the suspicious Ottoman censorship in the late nineteenth century had prevented from completion.²⁸⁷ In 1956, he collected what he could

²⁸⁴ Dictionaries published by the Imprimerie Catholique, and later by Dār Al-Mašriq included: A bilingual Arabic-French dictionary by Fr. Belot, *al-Farā'id al-Durriyya fi al-Luğatayn al-'Arabiyya wa al-Faransiyya* (conceived following the model of Fr. Cuhe's bilingual Arabic-French dictionary, in 2 volumes, 1883, 1888, 1889, 1893, 1896, 1898, 1900). Cf. Camille Aboussouan, Ed., *Le Livre et le Liban, jusqu'à 1900* (Paris: Unesco, 1982) 152. A French-Arabic dictionary *Dictionnaire français-arabe* (1890); and an abridged version *Belot Classique: Petit Dictionnaire Français-Arabe Illustré* (1892); Op. cit. Herzstein, 32. An Arabic Dictionary *Aqrab al-Mawārid fi Fuṣaḥ al-'Arabiyya wa al-Šawārid* (in 3 volumes, 1889-1893) by the Arabic Rhetoric Professor at Université Saint-Joseph, Sa'īd al-Šartūnī. Op. cit. Herzstein, 32.

²⁸⁵ The Dār al-Mašriq this *Munğid* series includes: *al-Munğid fi al-Luğa wa al-'Alām*, *al-Munğid al-'Abğadi*, *al-Munğid fi al-'Amtāl wa al-Ḥikam wa al-Farā'id al-Luğawiyya*, *Munğid al-Ġayb* ('arabi-faransi'), *Munğid al-Ġayb* (faransi-'arabi'), *al-Munğid* (faransi-'arabi'), *al-Munğid al-'Ydādi*, *al-Munğid fi al-Ḥurūf wa-'I'rābiha*, *al-Munğid fi al-Luğa al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'āšira*, *al-Munğid fi al-Mutarādīfāt wa al-Mutağānisāt*, *al-Munğid al-Wasīf* fi al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'āšira, *Munğid al-Ṭullāb*, and *Munğid al-Šijār*.

²⁸⁶ Fu'ād Afrām al-Bustānī, Ed., *Dā'irat al-ma'ārif: qāmūs 'āmm li-kull fann wa-maṭlab*, (Encyclopedia Arabica. Publiée avec la collab. d'un comité de spécialistes par Fouad E. Boustany) Vol. 1. (1956) – Vol. 15. (1996), Bayrūt: al-Maṭba'a al-Kāṭūlikiyya (Imprimerie Catholique) 1956-1996. Dimensions: 25 x 32 cm. It was published over a period of forty years with the last volume published posthumously in 1996.

²⁸⁷ Aly Mahmoud (Associated Press Writer), *Beirut, Lewiston Daily Sun* (Aug. 21, 1973) p 20. Online archive. Web. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=IT5EXw6izGUC&dat=19730821&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>. Last consulted, May 4, 2015.

find of the volumes of the earlier *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif* and formed a committee of “the best talents in Arab universities” to prepare material for the encyclopedia,²⁸⁸ while he himself edited and wrote the main articles. The Imprimerie Catholique's edition of *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif* was published intermittently from 1956 until 1996. From 1983, the work on the encyclopedia halted, then in 1996, the last volume (Vol. 15) was published posthumously two years after Bustānī's death.

Fu'ād Ifrām al-Bustānī was born in 1904 in Dayr al-Qamar (Lebanon) and died in 1994 in Beirut. He is a renowned Lebanese writer who, after completing his education at the Jesuit College and the Université Saint-Joseph, taught at several universities in Beirut, among which were the Université Saint-Joseph's Institut des Lettres Orientales, and the École des Sciences Politiques of the USJ's Law School. He was director of the École Normale Libanaise which he founded and directed from 1943 to 1953. In 1953, he founded the Lebanese University—“Lebanon's only public university and its only ‘academic’ disseminator of ‘official’ history”²⁸⁹—and became its first Rector remaining in this post until 1970. He edited a series of classical Arabic literary works, in fifty-seven volumes, known as *Al-Rawā'i* (*The Masterpieces*), writing for each the introduction, extracts, annotations, and analysis. He also published a comprehensive study in three volumes of Lebanon's history under the rule of the Emirs Ma'n and Šihāb of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, a special volume dedicated to the Emir Faḥr al-Dīn (1585-1635), presented as a living legend in two books entitled, *Fi 'Ahd a-Amūr* (*In the Time of the Emir*, 1926 and 1940),²⁹⁰ and a collection of short stories and a novel entitled *Limādā?* (*Why?*, 1930).²⁹¹ He was author of the *Munğid al-Ṭullāb* and published several works of reference cataloguing the Arameo-Canaanite etymology of common Lebanese words and idiomatic expressions. He was the first proponent of Sa'īd 'Aql's theories about a distinct and independent ‘Lebanese language’, which he popularized and argued against “the ‘orthodox’ evidence that saw the Lebanese vernacular as a dialect of Arabic.”²⁹² Like 'Aql, al-Bustānī was convinced “that the Phoenician language was still spoken by the Lebanese today, with certain variations [and] that the Phoenician (Lebanese) language has undergone light changes”²⁹³ due to its contact with Arabic and other languages. In Ifrām al-Bustānī's view, “the modern Lebanese

²⁸⁸ Op Cit. *Aly Mahmoud*, 1973. 20.

²⁸⁹ Frank Salameh, *Language, Memory, and Identity in the Middle East: The Case of Lebanon* (Plymouth. UK: Lexington Books, 2012) 264.

²⁹⁰ An illustrated version for children (from 12 years) was published in French, entitled *Au temps de l'Émir: contes et nouvelles de l'histoire du Liban*, Fouad Ephrem Al-Boustany, (Mansourie: Aleph Ad-da'irat, 2006). Translation by Hareth Boustany and Marina Boustany Bernotti. Illustrated by Raed Charaf.

²⁹¹ Joseph Sokhn, “Fouad Ephrem Boustany - Une sommité internationale,” (Culture Générale, Beyrouth 1998). Cf. *One Fine Art Gallery*. <http://onefineart.com/en/artists/fouad-ephrem-boustany/> and “Fouad Ephrem Boustany 1906 - 1994.” Web. <http://www.onefineart.com/en/artists/fouad-ephrem-boustany/sommite-internationale.shtml>. Last consulted: 31 April 2016.

²⁹² Op. cit. Salameh, 264.

²⁹³ Op. cit. Salameh, 264.

vernacular is still imbued with specifically Canaanite and Aramaic phonological, syntactic, and lexical attributes, that do not even exist in the Arabic language.”²⁹⁴ He argued that the Lebanese language’s syntax has remained Arameo-Canaanite.²⁹⁵ He wrote a number of articles on topics including literary criticism for several newspapers and magazines in Beirut, including the literary magazine *al-Makšūf* (discussed in the next chapter), and established the literary page in the *al-Bašīr* newspaper which he called *Fi Sabīl al-Taḳāfa* (*For the Sake of Culture*)

In many respects, Fu’ād Ifrām al-Bustānī’s career as a writer (historian and critic) and educator followed in the footsteps of both his ancestral predecessors (the Bustānīs) and his colleagues Fr. Louis Cheikho. Like Cheikho, he was a prolific writer, literary critic, historian and educator. He taught Arabic Rhetoric and literature, Arab civilization and history at the Université Saint-Joseph.²⁹⁶ He succeeded Cheikho as editor-in chief of the cultural journal *al-Mašriq* (1927–1942), first under the direction of Fr. Henri Lammens, director from 1927 until 1933, then under the direction of Fr. René Mouterde (1880–1962), director from 1934 to 1939,²⁹⁷ and finally under the direction of Fr. Robert Šidyāq, director from 1939 to 1942, producing in 1942 a ‘farewell issue’ with Fr. René Mouterde.²⁹⁸ He left behind a cultural heritage of some 237 works.²⁹⁹

1.3.5.5. *Al-Bašīr* and *Al-Mašriq*, (*Al-Bašīr* newspaper in 1870 / *Al-Mašriq* journal 1898)

Al-Bašīr (*The Messenger*): The origins of this publication go back to the periodical *Al-Bašīr* which was a triweekly religious periodical initially published to defend the true Christian faith in the Orient. In January 1870, Fr A. Monnot created *Al-Mağma‘ al-Fātikānī* (*The Vatican Council*), an 8-page weekly brochure in Arabic, which he published in defense of the Vatican against the attacks of the Protestant newspapers in Beirut. In 1871, this periodical became known under the name of *Al-Bašīr*, and acquired the format of a journal and doubled the number of its pages. In 1888, the journal received a certificate and a silver medal from the Roman Jubilee Committee of Pope Leo

²⁹⁴ Op. cit. Salameh, 264.

²⁹⁵ Op. cit. Salameh, 264.

²⁹⁶ He taught from 1925–1971 at various schools and universities in Beirut: Frères Maristes, École Normale (which he founded in 1942), Collège Patriarchal, Collège de la Sagesse, L’École Supérieure des Lettres at the Académie Libanaise des Beaux Arts (ALBA), L’École Militaire, and the Université Libanaise (which he founded in 1953, and was its director until 1970). Folder published by the F. E. Boustany Foundation, distributed with a series of DVDs entitled *Lubnān al-Dā‘im*, by Fu’ād Efrām al-Bustānī on the history of Lebanon. Beirut, www.f-e-boustany.org

²⁹⁷ Georges Tessier. Éloge funèbre de M. René Mouterde, correspondant de l’Académie. In: *Comptes rendus des séances de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 106e année, N. 1, 1962. pp. 15-17. PDF. url : [/web/revues/home/prescript/article/crai_0065-0536_1962_num_106_1_11372](http://web/revues/home/prescript/article/crai_0065-0536_1962_num_106_1_11372) Accessed on 03 mai 2015.

²⁹⁸ Ahyāf Sinnū, “Mağallat al-Mašriq wa al-Ādāb al-‘Arabiyya Mundu al-Ġāhiliyya Ḥatta al-Ḥarb al-‘Ālamiyya al-‘Ula”, *Al-Mašriq*, vol. 72, 1998, pp. 307–342. PDF.

²⁹⁹ Folder published by the F. E. Boustany Foundation, distributed with a series of DVDs entitled *Lubnān al-Dā‘im*, by Fu’ād Efrām al-Bustānī on the history of Lebanon. Beirut, www.f-e-boustany.org. See also Imīl Bağğānī, *Fu’ād Ifrām al-Bustānī: Lubnān Sanat 1943, Ru’ya wa Maḥāwif*. Beirut: Dār al-Nahār lil-Našr, 2006).

XIII, and was commended on its “zeal in the fight for the defense of the interests of Christians and the reliability of the information it provided” (though it was censored at times by the Ottoman censors in Istanbul). On the 1st of January 1894, *Al-Bašīr* adopted the large format of European newspapers.³⁰⁰ In the catalogue of 1922, the mission of *Al-Bašīr* is stated as a journal “created to establish unbroken link between the Catholic subjects of the East and those in Europe. It keeps its readers informed about all that interests them in the Levant. It addresses all sort of topics: religious, scientific, historical, literary, artistic and financial....”³⁰¹ In 1898, it was replaced by the journal *Al-Mašriq*.

Al-Mašriq (The Orient): *Al-Mašriq* was founded on the first of January 1898 by Fr. Louis Cheikho, and is still in circulation, published by Dār al-Mašriq. It is a journal on literature, culture and scientific research, specializing in Oriental Studies and published under the direction of the Jesuits of the Université Saint-Joseph. Its original stated mission, expressed in its name, ‘is to publish about the Orient and for its benefits.’³⁰² It is an Arabic monthly of about 80 pages, containing articles on a range of topics from historical, to literary, to philosophical, to polemical, to religious, to scientific, and with a rich bibliography of works published in the Middle East.³⁰³ Since January 2013, a new online version has been launched, thus reaching out to modern international audiences.

1.3.5.6. Prose and novels

The Imprimerie Catholique also published popular literature addressed to students and for leisurely readings—though they could also be enjoyed by older adults. These books included *Alfa Layla wa-Layla* (1001 Arabian Nights. A. Šālḥānī, Ed. 5 Vols., 1888, 1890, 1956, 1958), *Kalīla wa-Dimna* (1905, 1926, 1947, 1973, 1980), *Riwāyāt Sulaymān al-Ḥakīm* (*The Tales of Sulaymān the Wise*, by Ifrām al-Dīrānī, 1885), and *Al-Rihla al-Sūriyya fi Amrika al-Mutawassiṭa wa al-Ġunūbiyya* (*The Syrian Journey into Central and South America*, by Henry Lammens, 1894. Translated by Rašīd al-Šartūnī).

³⁰⁰ Op. cit. Herzstein, 32.

³⁰¹ *Imprimerie Catholique, Catalogue Général* (Beirut: 1922), 60. Original text in French: “*Al-Bachir*. Journal arabe semi-quotidien. Créé pour mettre un lien continu entre les populations catholiques de l’Orient et celle d’Europe. *Al-Bachir* tient ses lecteurs au courant de tout ce qui intéresse le Levant. Il traite toutes sortes de questions: religieuses, scientifique, historiques, littéraires, artistiques et financières. *Al-Bachir* est un des journaux les mieux informés. Il est aussi un de ceux qui sont le mieux rédigés et dont la langue est des plus littéraires.”

³⁰² *Imprimerie Catholique, Catalogue Général* (Beirut: 1922), 60. Original text in French: “*Al-Machriq*. Revue arabe religieuse, scientifique et littéraire. Sous la direction des Pères de l’Université St. Joseph. Paraissant chaque mois en un fascicule de 80 pages grand in-8. Cette revue s’occupe spécialement d’étudier toutes les questions religieuses, scientifiques, littéraires et historiques qui ont rapport à l’Orient; de publier des textes originaux et de faire connaître les travaux des Orientalistes. Chaque numéro contient un bulletin bibliographique où l’on rend compte des publications relatives à l’Orient.” 1921 was the nineteenth year of this monthly journal’s publication.

³⁰³ Ibid. Herzstein, 32.

1.3.6. Aesthetic contribution

The Imprimerie Catholique played a formative role in the publishing, book printing and design industries in the Arab region. Through their continuous quest for raising the quality of the printed Arabic book, inventing new design and typesetting techniques, and meticulous printing, they competed with the American Protestants becoming a role model for educational and fine-printed books in the Arab World.

1.3.6.1. *Fine book printing and attention to detail*

For the Jesuits to combat the American Protestants on their own terms, they had to do more than just print the right texts and furnish their schools with the appropriate textbooks. They had to prove their superiority and build a spectacular reputation. They raised the appropriate funding to eventually have the right equipment to set up a proper printing press with professional equipment—eventually also having their own dedicated building. Once that goal was reached, they set out to perfect the books they produced in both content and aesthetic presentation.

According to Fr. Paul Brouwers, when he arrived as director of the Imprimerie Catholique in the 1970s, there were some seven staff members still hand-setting type. They never made mistakes selecting from the huge sorts. An example of the handset books were the encyclopedia volumes of Fu'ād Efram al-Bustānī (with the exception of the last Volume 15 which was typeset in Monotype Arabic).³⁰⁴ The Imprimerie Catholique was specialized in intellectual books, therefore high quality editing, proofreading, copy correction and typesetting (whether with moveable printing types, or later with phototypesetting) was carried out by highly skilled staff members. When the Imprimerie Catholique stopped operating, its staff found alternative work easily in the (graphic) printing industry for they were sought after for their level of skill and expertise.³⁰⁵

The manuscripts (for books or magazines) that were submitted to the Imprimerie Catholique were “carefully studied before being forwarded to the Production Management for handling.”³⁰⁶ The production process was then to start with the editing and copy corrections, then the manuscript was referred to the Design Department in order to set the guidelines for the typesetting and overall layout. Proofs were then produced and once corrected “the galleys or films were ready for further camera work, and color selection, imposition and platemaking, followed by printing (letterpress or offset), folding, assembling and binding.”³⁰⁷ That was in brief their

³⁰⁴ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

³⁰⁵ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

³⁰⁶ Op. cit. *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, 12.

³⁰⁷ Op. cit. *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, 12.

professional procedure, and combined with highly qualified staff and state-of-the-art machines, the Imprimerie Catholique retained its reputation as one of Lebanon's finest book printers and publishers of intellectual and academic publications. In their capacity as a 'commercial' printing press, they also printed government value papers and stamps.

1.3.6.2. *The printing types and font foundry*

From its inception, the Imprimerie Catholique had used Arabic printing types that were cut in Paris. It soon discovered the shortcomings and limitations of its Arabic types and in 1868 it began employing the *American Arabic* types cut and produced at the American Mission Press in Beirut.³⁰⁸ Using the American types, the Imprimerie Catholique published books such as *Nuḥab al-Mulāḥ* (*Best Selection of Literary Texts*, schoolbook for studying the Arabic language, edited by J. B. Belot with the help of Ibrāhīm al-Yāziḡī (1847–1906),³⁰⁹ and published in 1874). Later the press acquired fonts that were considered of better aesthetic quality originating from Istanbul (they came to be known simply as the *Stambūlī* types). The *Stambūlī* types were then modified, new matrices were cut, and the new cast types became the famous Imprimerie Catholique *Stambūlī* types.³¹⁰ "This more orthodox, clear and workmanlike typeface was based on Turkish models, and also became very popular throughout the Levant."³¹¹ However, though considered an improvement, it did not solve the problem of typesetting Arabic vowels elegantly and efficiently (the diacritics were still set separately as additional independent characters).³¹² This added complexity may have been seen as time consuming and prone to mistakes. To resolve this problem and work on further refining the types, it was decided to send Fr. Belot's assistant and manager of the workshops,

³⁰⁸ Op. cit. Šābāt, 52. Šayḥu, 61. Nasrallah, 53.

³⁰⁹ Ibrāhīm al-Yāziḡī: born in 1847 in Lebanon, died in 1906 in Egypt. He was a poet, grammarian, a man of letters and a Greek Catholic former student of the Jesuit College, whose family originated from Ḥoms (Syria). Like his father Nāṣif al-Yāziḡī, Ibrāhīm made significant contributions to the Arabic cultural awakening of the late nineteenth century. He was responsible for the translation of the award-winning Catholic Arabic Bible from 1876–1879, a bibliophile monument of incomparable design quality. And considered, in part owing to Ibrāhīm al-Yāziḡī's translation, as linguistically richer than the translation of the Protestant Bible of the American Press (1856). According to some this sophisticated language made it rather inaccessible to ordinary people and more fit for the educated elite and priests. It was the second bible translation in the Arabic language. He designed a simplified Arabic font with a reduced character set (from the customary 300 to 60 characters). His Arabic font served as model for the creation of the Arabic typewriter's keyboard—later adopted for Arabic computer keyboards. In addition to his literary career, he had an interest in art and considered one of the best calligraphers of his generation. He was editor of several newspapers and magazines, and achieved fame for a poem he wrote as an ode to patriotism. The poem entitled *Tanabbahū wa-istaḡīqū ayyuhā al-ʿArabu* (Beware, ye Arabs and awake) was an incitement to Arab insurgency. It denounced the evils of sectarianism and called upon the Syrians to unify against Turkish despotism. This poem was memorized, recited in secret, and soon spread by word of mouth gaining widespread fame. Ibrāhīm al-Yāziḡī eventually fled to Egypt in order to avoid Ottoman repression and died in exile in 1906. Cf. ʿIsa Miḥāʾil Sāba, *al-Šayḥ Ibrāhīm al-Yāziḡī 1847–1906* (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif bi-Miṣr, 1955).

³¹⁰ Op. cit. Cheikho, 61.

³¹¹ Cf. Roper, "History of the Book in the Muslim World," 2010, 334.

³¹² Op. cit. Kortbawi, Appendix II.

Br. Marie Elias (1840–1901),³¹³ to Paris and London to acquire training and technical knowledge.³¹⁴ In 1874, the Imprimerie Catholique established its own internal font foundry³¹⁵ and set about modifying and improving its font. After numerous trials, Br. Marie-Elias succeeded in inventing a new technique to aesthetically solve the problems of the diacritic positioning of Arabic typesetting. He designed a new system that brought an aesthetic improvement to the diacritic positioning, by casting the Arabic type in a single piece with their vocalization marks. He thus increased the layout of the type case and character set from 865 to 1,369 sorts.³¹⁶ This new approach to setting Arabic type spread to most of the Arabic printing presses of the time, which adopted the same layout of the type case for the constituent characters to include the compound letter/vocalization characters.³¹⁷ The first book to be typeset with these Arab types was the Catholic Bible, published in 1876.³¹⁸ Like the American Press, the Imprimerie Catholique also set about producing their own Arabic language bible. Fr. Augustin Rodet (1828–1906) took on the task of translating the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Arabic. Then the Arabic text was edited and corrected by Ibrāhīm al-Yāziǧī (1847–1906). Finally it was printed and produced to the highest visual and technical standards, in three volumes in 1876, 1877, and 1879. It was exhibited in Paris in 1878 and received the Golden Medal for its design and fine printing quality.³¹⁹

The moveable printing types of the Imprimerie Catholique, designed according to a modern style of Ottoman *Nash*, became reputed for their elegance and clarity. Eventually even the American Protestants wanted to use these types for their own bible, and the Imprimerie Catholique produced the printing types for them. The fierce rivalry (some 40 years later) eventually

³¹³ Brother Marie Elias: born in 1840 in Haifa (Ḥayfa, Palestine), Jesuit in 1862, died in 1901 in Ta'nāyil (Lebanon). He was born Muslim and converted to Catholicism. He was sent to France for his security and entered the Jesuit order in 1862 after which he returned to the Middle East. He was originally a metal smith and his skills led to his being charged with managing the workshops and font foundry of the Imprimerie Catholique in 1869. He was sent to Paris and then London for training in the art of printing and returned to Beirut to bring technical improvements to the press, especially his improvements on the Arabic fonts and typesetting. He managed the workshops of the Imprimerie Catholique for thirty-two years and until his death in 1901, and contributed to the press's reputation as one of the finest printing presses in the Ottoman Empire. During his tenure, he managed to undertake significant initiatives, the most important of which was his new Arabic Font and the Arabic Bible of 1876 for which this font was used, and which was crowned with a golden medal in Paris (mainly for its superior Arabic font that according to Jury was the best designed Arabic font of its time). With this Br. Marie-Elias brought the right attention and fame to the Imprimerie Catholique and helped the Jesuit missionaries with their work and in furthering their spiritual and educational goals. Op. cit. Jalabert 132, 499. Herzstein, 39.

³¹⁴ Op. cit. Kortbawi, 56. Cf. John Kortbawi. 'Arabic Typography: A Brief History and Attempts to Reform it in Parallel with latin Typography'. *TypoGraphic*. Issue No. 60. (London: International Society of Typographic Designers, 2004) PDF.

³¹⁵ Jean-Christophe Loubet del Bayle, "Les imprimeries missionnaires" *Typographie & Civilisation*. 2006. http://www.typographie.org/gutenberg/liban/liban_3.html

³¹⁶ Op. cit. Kortbawi, 57.

³¹⁷ Op. cit. Kortbawi, 57.

³¹⁸ Op. cit. *130 ans au service de l'art graphique*, 1.

³¹⁹ Op. cit. Šabāt, 61–62. Nasrallah, 53.

turned into a congenial cooperation ³²⁰ (with the situation totally reversed; the Imprimerie Catholique that began publishing using the *Amrīkānī* fonts for their early Arabic books, was now producing their *Stambūlī* Arabic fonts for the Protestant publications of the American Press).

Their work on typography continued to evolve along with new developments in technology. For the Monotype and Linotype typesetters, the Imprimerie Catholique's foundry also cast two types of 16pt. fonts, one of which was in Semibold Kufic style. In 1902, they designed and produced their other Oriental types such as Armenian, Syriac, and Coptic. They also had some exotic types like hieroglyphs for typesetting works on Ancient Egypt.³²¹ They had some competition from Egypt and Aleppo for their Armenian types, and for their Latin types from the French type foundry of Deberny Peignot (represented in Beirut by Joseph Kadige Cie, founded in 1898).³²² Until the early 1950s, the Imprimerie Catholique was still using their internally punch-cut Arabic printing types; the likes of *Arabic Ghossoub*, by the eminent calligrapher of that time Sheikh Nassib Makarem (al-Šayḥ Naṣīb Makārīm, 1889–1971), *al-ʿArabiyya al-Muwaḥḥada* (Unified Arabic) by Nasri Khattar (Naṣrī Ḥaṭṭār, 1911–1998),³²³ and the Arabic Linotype and Monotype fonts. Finally at the beginning of the 1960s they started employing the Monophoto fonts.³²⁴

In 1970–1971, Monotype commissioned the Imprimerie Catholique to work with them on improving the vocalization marks and diacritic positioning of their Arabic types for the Monotype phototypesetter. The vocalization marks were creating problems in the typesetting so that they worked properly in combination with complex ligatures. Otherwise the vocalization marks could only be used with the simplified Arabic font that was widely spaced (with extra character space used for the vocalization marks), thus creating an airy text that was aesthetically unappealing.³²⁵ Jean Daccache (Ġān Dakkāš, n.d.), one of the Arabic typesetters and technicians, worked on this project under the supervision of Nersess Meksian (n.d.) and others who initially worked in the photogravure and typesetting departments,³²⁶ and in 1975 they succeeded in creating a satisfactory

³²⁰ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

³²¹ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

³²² Loubet del Bayle. *Typographie & Civilisation*. 2006.

³²³ Cf. Nasri Khattar. *The unified Arabic type* (New York: 1947). Yara Khoury Nammour. *Nasri Khattar, A Modernist Typotect* (Amsterdam: Khatt Books, 2014) 70–147.

³²⁴ John Kortbawi, "Imprimerie Catholique: The History of Publishing Educational Arabic Books," *Al-Kitāb wa Mustaqbal al-Ṭāqāfa al-ʿArabiyya*: Contemporary Arabic Book Design Panel (Abu Dhabi: Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, 2012).

³²⁵ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

³²⁶ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

system for diacritic positioning. They also began working on transferring the lead types to the Monotype typesetter but this work was never completed.³²⁷

1.3.6.2.1. The 1890 specimen was combined with a catalogue of books from the press, and appears as an independent section at end of the book (pages 42–63). The booklet is entitled, *Orientalia, Catalogue Spécial et Spécimens des Caractères de l’Imprimerie Catholique, Beyrouth (Syrie), 1890*. It contains the following printed types: *Types Beyrouthin* in 9pt (with and without vocalization marks); *Type Américain* in 11pt (without vocalization marks), in 14pt, 18pt and 23pt (with and without vocalization marks); *Type Égyptien* in 14pt (with and without vocalization marks); *Type de Constantinople* in 18pt and 22pt (with and without vocalization marks); *Type Allam* 32pt (with and without vocalization marks); *Caractères Arabes pour Titre: Mašq, Tilot (Tuluṭ), Tilot de Cple (Tuluṭ Istambūlī), Type Ruq‘a, Type Persan (Fārsī); Caractères Turcs* in 14pt, 18pt, and 22pt. The rest of the pages contain text and fancy fonts for Armenian, Hebrew, Syriac, Greek and Latin. The design of this specimen is minimal and functional; the fonts are presented in justified paragraphs of sample texts starting with an indent, the name of font and size in French above in a centered alignment, and each type is separated by a decorative line or fleuron that varies for each font and gives variety (possibly with the intent of emphasizing the aesthetic flavor of each particular font).

1.3.6.2.2. The 1905 specimen is entitled, *Spécimens des Caractères de l’Imprimerie Catholique, Beyrouth (Syrie), Spécialités Orientales*. It contains the following printed types: *Arabe* in 32pt (without vocalization marks); *Arabe* in 22pt (with and without vocalization marks); *Arabe* in 18pt (with and without vocalization marks); *Arabe* in 14pt (with and without vocalization marks); *Arabe* in 9pt (with and without vocalization marks); *Turc* in 22pt (without vocalization marks); *Turc* in 18pt and 14 pt (without vocalization marks). The rest of the pages contain text for the other Oriental scripts Persian, Coptic, Armenian, Hebrew and Syriac. The design of this specimen is rather luxurious and ornamental. The fonts are presented in justified paragraphs of sample texts taken from existing printed specimens of books and publications. The text is framed by a 4-color (Black, Royal Blue, Burgundy Red and Gold). The fonts are not named, only the script, and the size of the main text (some samples show titling and mix of sizes) is listed clearly under the script (*Arabe, Turc, ...*) with each page dedicated to one size. The large book size of the specimen also adds to this valorization of the fonts presented. It is not clear why this edition of the font specimen is so elegantly printed and presented, and if it was designed to mark a specific commemoration

³²⁷ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

1.3.6.2.3. The 1921 specimen is entitled, *Spécimens des Caractères*. It contains the following printed types: *Arabe* in 40pt (*Tahsin*); in 22pt (*Allam*); 28pt (*Persan*); in 24pt (*Roqai*); in 18pt and 22pt (*Istambouli*); in 14pt (*Boulaq*); in 10pt (*Bairouti*). The rest of the pages contain text for the other Oriental scripts *Syriaque* (in 40pt, 22pt *gras*, 18pt, and 12pt), *Chaldéen* (in 18pt), *Estranghelo* (in 16pt), *Éthiopien* (in 14pt), *Hébreu* (in 26pt, 12pt, and 8pt), *Copte* (in 14pt), *Grec* (in 12pt, 10pt, and 8 pt), and *Arménien* (in 14pt, and 9 pt). The design of this specimen is quite simple: the sample of texts are printed in black and enclosed within a round-cornered frame consisting of a finely engraved image of a rope with thin floral curlicues sticking extending out of it towards the outer margins. This frame is printed in red, and those two printing colors are used for the cover design. The cover carries a more illustrative frame (like an arched window with climbing vines on each side), engraved in the same style and printed in the same red ink, and containing the name of the Imprimerie Catholique, Beyrouth in the top compartment of the frame (or the arched part) and with the rest of the title of the booklet below. The date of the publication only appears inside on the title page that and is more descriptive stating: *catalogue des caractères arabes et étrangers fondus à l'Imprimerie Catholique, Beyrouth 1921*.

A more functional booklet, and undated version of the 1921 specimen, existed that may have been prepared for internal use within the printing houses's art department. This version is devoid of ornament and is printed on rather thin paper, with a simple cover of the same thin paper. The cover is bilingual and states the same information as the one in the 1921 specimen.

1.3.6.2.4. The 1925 specimen. It contains the same collection of printing types as the 1921 specimen book. The main difference is the design of the booklet itself. The cover is printed in one color, in red. The text is set in a centered alignment and in all-caps (just as the like the previous specimen books) with the name of the Imprimerie Catholique given a bold and more central placement on two lines, in the middle of the cover. A half frame is placed in the bottom left corner of the cover; extending on the left and bottom sides of the cover and consisting of realistically drawn and engraved floral motifs extending from a square corner medallion. The asymmetrical frame in contrast to the centrally aligned typography gives a glimpse to the onset of a new modern design era at the Imprimerie Catholique's art department. The inside pages display a very different and more simplified single-line red frame, with a horizontal compartment at the top and bottom. The top compartment contains a repetitive paisley motif in small circular yin-yang configuration, also printed in red, whereas the bottom compartment of the frame contains the page numbers printed in black. The title page is set in the same typography as the cover (in black) and the rest of

the pages display the text specimens in the various scripts and sizes, inside the red frame and printed in black.

1.3.6.2.5. The undated specimen (1930s-1940s). Judging from images of a 1948 specimen that uses the same illustration on the cover, but modified to fit another format, this luxurious version has a hard dark blue cardboard cover stamped with silver foil and is bound by two screws that make the book adjustable for adding more pages or removing others. The illustration shows an engraving of the initials of the Imprimerie Catholique as the two metal types I C being picked by a tweezers below it in various font styles and in all caps is the word *CARACTÈRES*. The format of the book is elegant, tall and narrow. The title page repeats the image on the cover printed in orange and the word *caractères* in alternating orange and black ink. Below this the name of the Imprimerie Catholique and its address is printed in black, the whole is set justified with the width of the illustration and lettering above it. The design of the inside pages is quite simple, the style of the font (or its name) is set in the bold *Roqai* [Ruq'a] font and printed in black, set centered at the top of the page. Below this a thin orange line, that extends to define the column width, is used to separate the font style from the text that states the size (ie. *ǧism 14 basīṭ*, or size 14 unvocalized). This latter text is printed the same orange ink as the line, and is also set centrally aligned. Below this, the sample of text is used printed in black, in tall and narrow justified columns. Like the layout of a book, the pages of this specimen leave generous margins around the text block and ample leading between the the lines of text, giving the overall page a lightness and elegance.

The specimen books show us that the Arabic type collection of the Imprimeries Catholique did not change over the years. Their initial investment into creating a wide range of fonts in the 1890s, in a variety of styles and sizes, could explain their reluctance to invest into the creation of more fonts. What they had created was sufficient for use in typesetting and designing their publications and printed matter, as well as supplying typographic material to other printing presses and publishers in Beirut. The variety of their type collection made it possible to design books from the simplest educational textbooks, to bilingual dictionaries (such as Arabic-French or Arabic Syriac), to ornamental and visually elaborate art catalogue (such as the catalogues of the Lebanese arts and performing arts summer festival, known as the Baalbeck Festival). The last specimen book from the 1940s testify to the shifting interest of the Imprimerie Catholique, away from designing, casting and selling of printing types, towards commercial printing and publishing. As mentioned earlier the Oriental Type Foundry was sold to their former employee Ḥasīb Dirġām in 1956, though they continued to use and buy fonts as needed from this new independent foundry. Their book

design and typographic solutions described here below, show how the fonts and typesetting solutions of the Imprimerie Catholique set standards and eventually established book design conventions for the twentieth-century printed Arabic book.

1.3.6.3. *Book design*

From the outset, the Imprimerie Catholique strove to be at the forefront of Arabic fine book design, production and publishing (starting with their major endeavor on the Arabic Bible of 1876). Once they had acquired the right equipment, staff and expertise they set about bringing considerable developments to Arabic book design and printing. They developed a new typeface that matched their publishing vision, using a classical elegant Ottoman *Nash-style* and yet modifying it to fit the needs of ‘modern’ book design aesthetics of their times (using as a model the nineteenth century French book design aesthetics). They edited, wrote, and published educational books, reviving some almost forgotten Arabic literary texts, rendering them into classics, and distributing them all over the Arab world. With their distribution activities they not only disseminated knowledge on Arabic culture, but they also decidedly influenced the visual taste of readers, forging a certain standard look for intellectual Arabic books, and a style, as can be seen in this study, that has had long-lasting influence on Arabic book design to this day.

The Imprimerie Catholique had a streamlined production process (and ample storage space) especially important for their most valued publications, their reference books and dictionaries. However, it was very difficult to get a clear answer when asked about their style guides for typesetting. No records have survived and it is even questionable whether there were ever any written guidelines that were in use. According to Fr. Paul Brouwers, the last editor and operational director, Edouard Chemali (Idwār Šemālī, n.d.) had worked with Mr. Fatta and the design director Gabi Malki (Gābī Mālkī, n.d.) on producing the famous dictionaries of the Imprimerie Catholique. Mr. Malki who left the printing press in the 1990s, had his own set of style sheets and rules for book design typesetting that he used for guiding both his clients and his staff. One way to analyze the typesetting conventions he and his predecessors have developed is to examine a few key publications from various periods directly. Following my first hand examination of the printed books I have come to the following observations listed here below.

1.3.6.3.1. *The 1876 Arabic Bible (in three volumes)* was their first design and type design endeavor which earned them their reputation of excellence (as well as further financial support). That bible was so carefully designed and typeset, and according to Fr. Paul Brouwers had no mistakes, which is quite a feat for Arabic hand-setting, considering that the text was fully vocalized

and composed from a case of some 1369 sorts, not including the ornaments and fleurons which were different for each chapter. This bible was still reproduced photographically (with films and plates prepared from the original handset printed sheets) and offset printed, into the 1970s. Even a more informal and economic pocket-size edition was produced and distributed to the general public. This was produced by photographically scaling down the larger original printed sheets, leaving all the ornaments and decorative frames out.³²⁸ Surprisingly, the font, though reduced to about 70% of its original intended size, remains legible though a little light by today's standards of comfortable reading (when compared to the overall type weight of an average Arabic newspaper). These smaller bibles were printed on their most complex printing press under the supervision of one of their highly skilled printers, Mr. Bağğānī, who though illiterate had an incredible eye for detail and was therefore assigned the task of controlling the pagination, films and plates before going to press. The bibles were printed on 121 cm x 100 cm sheets, allowing 64 pages to be printed at a time.³²⁹ This cost-effective, pocket-size, edition of the Arabic Bible became very popular and sold in large quantities. In Fr. Paul Brouwers' words: "when we printed dictionaries and bibles, we needed to take into consideration the large amount of pages, the number of signatures, and the quantity of editions, because we would end up with thousands of pages that needed to be ordered, in order to be assembled and bound at a later date upon demand."

1.3.6.3.2. *Dictionaries and reference publications.* The Imprimerie Catholique and Dār al-Mašriq have published an extensive series of dictionaries and encyclopedia that cover many languages: English-Arabic and Arabic English, Arabic-French and French Arabic, Arabic-Arabic, Syriac-French and Syriac English and Syriac-Arabic, beside the Encyclopedia of Natural Sciences. Some of these dictionaries were conceived and collected in-house by specialists working as full-time employees and some were produced by external writers and researchers. Dictionaries in the early seventies were designed by Joseph Gebara (Ġūzīf Ġbārā, b. 1940), an eminent graphic designer who studied design in France. From mid 1977, all design work of the Imprimerie Catholique was handled by John Kortbawi (Ġān Qurṭbāwī, b. 1949).³³⁰ This extensive series of reference books established a modern standard in their design using inventive typographic covers, highly illustrated content (along the lines of the French Larousse dictionaries), complex typesetting that combined Latin and Arabic fonts, and simple grids that contributed to a clear reading hierarchy of the content. The third edition of the bilingual dictionary, *al-Munğid fi*

³²⁸ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

³²⁹ Op. cit. Brouwers, 2012. Appendix II.

³³⁰ Kortbawi, "History of Publishing Educational Arabic Books", 2012.

al-Amṭāl wal-Ḥikam wal-Fārā'id al-Luġawiyya, 'arabī-faransī, faransī-'arabī, by Ġūzif Na'ūm Naġġār (Beirut: Dār al-Mašriq, 2009) is a good example. The cover and the inside pages are structured on a 3-column grid. The cover displays the title in a large bold Nash font, set vertically with the title broken up into 5 lines and arranged in a composition that emulates a heartbeat in its up-and-down rhythm, the name of the author is aligned with the first line and set in the same font at half size. On the left side of the cover, bleeding off the page is a bar with the text set in reverse (*'arabī-faransī, faransī-'arabī*) that denotes that this is an Arabic-French and French-Arabic dictionary. The edition and publisher's name and logotype are set at the bottom, right aligned and marking the middle column of the grid. The grid becomes clearer on the inside pages. The introduction text is set in the classical Monotype Arabic Nash font, in a column that spans the width of two columns leaving the third (right column) blank, thus giving the text ample white space around it. The title *muqaddima* (introduction) is set right aligned at 2 cm from the top of the page in a bold version of the same Nash font, whereas the text is set right aligned at 6 cm from the top of the page. This arrangement is maintained for the first page of the section where the text is set in 3 narrow columns but starting 6 cm below from the top of the page. The section letter, for example the *alif*, is set in the same bold Nash font, reversed inside a colored square box the width of one column. This oversized 'drop cap' is placed aligned over the left column, giving it a highly visible and dramatic way of marking the beginning of the section. The main bilingual text is set in three narrow columns, and starts with the entry in bold on its own line, followed by the Arabic definition in a the fully vocalized Monotype Arabic font (both right aligned), then followed by the French translation (left aligned) set in a light sans serif font that contrasts with the Arabic font in color and style. This design shows clearly the hand of a designer concerned with highlighting the hierarchy of content and conscious of the modern composition that lends clarity to the text and makes browsing for information easier. Dictionaries and reference books eventually became Dār al-Mašriq's major specialization as publishers, and their best selling titles.

When compared to the original *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif* by Buṭrus al-Bustānī and sons, the version of *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif* by Fu'ād Ifrām al-Bustānī, published by the Imprimerie Catholique, is notably a product of its time. It is not only more modern in content but also in design. Its design has more similarity to the design of its dictionaries; the font of the Imprimerie Catholique's Monotype Arabic is used in combination with hand-lettered Nash and Nasta'liq calligraphy from the hand of renowned Lebanese calligrapher, Muḥtār al-Bābā (for the title and title page). The main text is set in a 3-column layout (4 cm wide with a 0.5 cm gutter). The *lemmata* (entry heading) is set in the same the bold Monotype Arabic font (16pt), below it the heading's translation in French set in a serif typeface of regular weight (at 14pt), some smaller extra lemmata in 12pt Arabic regular weight,

and all are placed in a centered alignment above the main text column. The main text column is set in Monotype Arabic regular (14/19pt), some French words appear in the same serif font (12pt) inside the Arabic text, and the text is composed in a justified alignment. Each section (*bāb*) begins with a large illustration containing the letter; a three-arches illustration containing the *alif* repeated 6 times in the larger middle arch, and flanked by the letter *A* in 3 styles (serif, sans serif, and gothic) on the right, and the equivalent starting 3 letters in other scripts (Phoenician, Hebrew, and Farsi). The arches are framed by an ornate frieze giving the impression of an architectural facade. The design of the cover, title page and front matter, the format and size are consistent throughout from Volume 1 (1956) to Volume 15 (1996). The overall effect of the typesetting and due the finer paper and printing technique is much lighter; the font thinner and the line spacing wider than that of the original editions printed by Maṭbaʿat al-Maʿārif in the later nineteenth century, and thus displays the traits that became synonymous not only with the style of the Imprimerie Catholique but also came to represent late twentieth century book design for scientific and reference publications in the Arabic language.

1.3.6.3.3. *Popular history and literature*

It is interesting here to focus on the classical Arabian tales that were published by the Imprimerie Catholique. These appeared in various editions and reprints and can show a development in their approach to designing literature and Arabic classic books. Here I examine and compare editions of the same text of *Alf Layla wa-Layla* (1001 *Arabian Nights*. Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1888, 1890, 1956, 1958), and of *Kalila wa-Dimna* (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1905, 1926, 1947, 1973, 1980).

1.3.6.3.3.1. *Alf Layla wa-Layla*. This series was published by the Imprimerie Catholique in an 'edited' version (toned down into a less risqué and more suitable reading for young adults).

—*Cover and title page*. In the 1890 edition, the cover and title page contain the same information, and are designed in the same way with the exception that the border framing the text on the cover is often a simple two-line frame, whereas the title page's frame is more decorative. This tradition has been carried through from the conventions of Arabic manuscript books (that often had engraved leather covers). The cover is printed on a colored board, whereas the title page is printed on the normal paper stock. The text hierarchy on the cover and title page is clear; the title is bolder and considerably larger than the rest, often an engraved calligraphic script. The volume or series name and the author (in this case only the publisher's name since there is no author) are set in the larger *Stambūlī* type (unaccented 22pt). This is separated by a floral motif from the rest of the information such as publication date, edition and legal registration —

information that we would nowadays consign to the colophon. The latter text appears in the smaller *Beirūti* (*Beyrouthin*) font, in 9pt size. The whole is centrally aligned within the frame and with a generous leading that gives each part of the information the appropriate emphasis.

—*Text pages.* The first copy of the text shows a plain running text set justified in a large *Nash* font (unaccented *Stambūlī* 22pt) within a simple line frame with floral corner-fleurons. The footnote text is at the bottom inside the frame, set in the same font at a smaller size (unaccented *Stambūlī* 18pt). The page numbering appears on top of the page centered inside the frame, in a smaller bold font (*Beyrouthin* 9pt). Each paragraph begins with a 1 cm indent. The column is 19-lines deep, including the footnotes when they occur, with an average of 8-12 words per line. The leading and word spacing is generous and gives an overall clarity to the page. There are no full stops at the end of paragraphs, but a large full stop is used to separate sentences within a paragraph. The typesetting follows a simple structure, like that of an informal handwritten manuscript. The 1890 edition (only two years later) shows a more sophisticated design and page architecture. In this version the main text column is set in a smaller size *Stambūlī* type (unaccented 18pt), with poetry verses set in two columns (indented from left and right sides) so that they are set centered within the one-column main text. The column is 24-lines deep, including the top line of page navigation and footnotes when they occur. The other major exception is that the pages navigation is now separated by a line from the main text, still set inside the frame, and contains both the chapter heading centered, and the page number placed inside the frame but towards the outer margins, with an indent of about 5 mm. All chapters end with an illustrative floral motif.

—*Fihris (content page).* The *fihris* (content page) is placed at the end of the book: the word *fihris* is an engraved titling sort in *Fārsī* style, the rest of the text is set in the *Stambūlī* font (in text and footnote sizes) and the page numbers in the 9pt bold *Beirūti* (*Beyrouthin*) font.

— *The 1956-58 editions of Alf Layla wa-Layla.* A major change in design characterizes this new series; text, ornament and illustration are seamlessly integrated into one style. The design of the cover (and title page) has become more illustrative and elaborate. The overall design was decidedly more ‘oriental’, with an intricate ‘oriental-carpet’ design in black filling the whole cover. The title of the book is hand-lettered, centrally aligned at the top, floral Kufic script inlaid within the intricate design of the background. Two cartouches are integrated at the bottom of the ‘carpet-like’ frame, one in a medallion shape containing in its diamond-shaped blank center a large numeral (indicating the volume number, from 1 to 7), and the second is horizontal oblong cartouche containing the Imprimerie Catholique name (*al-Maṭba‘a al-Kāthūlīkiyya*) in a Ruq‘a style. In the middle of the cover a larger cartouche (a stylized lantern or keyhole) reveals an illustration of an ‘Arabian thief’ with a treasure trove sampling jewels in the dark. The illustration is drawn in

the typical 1940s children's books style and is printed in four colors; the intricate Arabesque background design is printed in black, and the lettering inside the cartouches and for the book title is in one color that changes for each volume of the series.

The inside pages are printed in two colors, black for the text and red for all ornamental elements (cartouches, fleurons and illustrative engraved sorts). The series is clearly targeted at young readers, it is economical in its use (and reuse) of the cover illustration, and yet the internal page architecture shows an attention to detail and fine printing that matches the image of the Imprimerie Catholique (even when printing popular books).

The architecture and navigation of the books follows the international book design conventions that apply to this day; starting with a half-title page, a title page, a colophon, and introduction (or foreword), a chapter heading and main text pages. The half-title page carries only the title of the book, smaller and in a different lettering configuration enclosed within a diamond-shaped engraved medallion. This is placed in the middle of the page (both vertically and horizontally centered). The calligraphy is printed in black in an elegant *Tulūṭ* style, with the medallion printed in red around it.

The title page contains the title of the book in the same calligraphic style, in horizontal configuration and in larger size, enclosed in an oblong medallion (constructed of the same modular decorative elements). Underneath, in elegant *Ruq'ā* style, is the volume number printed in red, and under it four lines of text also in smaller size *Ruq'ā* style lettering; the name of the editor (and corrector), the designer and the publisher, with date of original edition mentioned: "corrected and edited for the first time in 1889 by Father Antoine Ṣālḥānī, under the art direction/design this fourth edition Ra'fat Al-Buḥayrī, at the Imprimerie Catholique, Beirut, Lebanon." All the elements on the title page are centrally aligned.

The colophon page follows on the back of the title page. It carried a description dating the printing of the book; "the printing of this volume one of *Kitāb Alf Layla wa-Layla* has been achieved³³¹ [completed] at the Imprimerie Catholique on the 25th of November 1952," and a registration number in small plain *Nasḥ* font. This is all customary in all Arabic books (to this day), but what is unusual is that even this simple colophon page carries three types of ornaments that will later be used inside the text pages—a display of the system of ornaments to be used for hierarchy purposes on the pages that follow.

The text pages carry four types of decorative motif/cartouches that are designed in an Islamic design reminiscent of Turkish/Persian manuscripts and printed in red throughout the book. The first is large centered at the top of the page and contains the title for the introduction

³³¹ This may have been a literal translation from French where the customary expression is: "*achevé d'imprimé*..."

(*Muqaddima*, in the *Ruq'a* style type, printed in black), or above the chapter title (in accented *Tulut* style) containing a small line illustration printed in black, or as book navigation containing in small *Ruq'a* style lettering the title of the chapter (or tale). The second motif is a cupola shaped 2-part medallion that is intersected by the text indicating the 'night in the tale' (ie. *al-layla al-tāsi'a*, or *al-layla 930*, etc.) also in a *Ruq'a* style type and printed in black. The third ornament is a 3-part circular medallion with a vertical and a horizontal extension that forms a corner ornament place in the outer and bottom margins, containing the page numbers and delineating the text block. Finally the fourth ornament, printed in black, is a tear-shaped medallion centered under the text block that marks the end of a chapter (or the introduction text).

1.3.6.3.2. *Kalīla wa-Dimna* (a collection of ancient animal Indian fables translated into Arabic from Persian by Ibn al-Muqaffa' around 750AD),³³² was published in several editions (1905, 1926, 1947, 1973, 1980s), and underwent major design changes with each new edition.

—*The 1905 edition of Kalīla wa-Dimna*. This is the earliest edition I found still preserved in the archives of the Bibliothèque Orientale in Beirut. Unlike the various manuscript versions of this book (BNF, arabe, 3465),³³³ the printed editions of the Imprimerie Catholique were hardly illustrated, and certainly the early editions were fairly devoid of decoration.

—*Cover and title page*. The cover and title page contain the same information, and are designed in the same way without any frame around the text. The cover is printed on a colored board, whereas the title page is printed on normal paper stock. The text hierarchy on the cover and title page is clear; the title is bolder and considerably larger than the rest, often an engraved calligraphic script. The book's title is in a *Nasta'liq* engraved sort, with the rest of the font set in two sizes of unaccented *Stambūlī* fonts. The book title is separated from the editor and publisher's name, which are also separated in turn from the rest of the information such as publication date, edition, by two short-line fleurons. This last information appears in the smaller *Beirūtī* (*Beyrouthin*) font, in gpt size. The whole is centrally aligned with a generous leading that gives each part of the information the appropriate emphasis.

—*Text pages*. The first copy of the text shows a plain running text set justified in an unaccented *Nash* font (unaccented *Stambūlī* 18pt for the introduction text, and *Stambūlī* 22pt for main text) within a simple line frame with geometric corner-motifs. The page numbering appears

³³² The original work in Sanskrit is known as the *Panchatantra* (*Five Discourses*), and dates back the fourth century BC. It was originally translated into Pehlavi by a Physician by the name of Burzoe. The Arabic translation was named of the two jackals, Kalila and Dimna, the main characters of the story. The book was so popular it became part of the Muslim folklore, and the Arabic text was used for later translations into several European, Eastern and African languages. Cf. Paul Lunde. "Kalila wa-Dimna," *Saudi Aramco World*, vol. 23, N° 4, July/August 1972. pp. 18-21. Web. <http://www.muslimheritage.com/article/kalila-wa-dimna>

³³³ Marie-Geneviève Guesdon, Annie Vernay-Nouri. *L'Art du Livre Arabe*. (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2001) 113.

on top of the page centered inside the frame, in a smaller bold font (*Beyrouthin* 9pt). Each paragraph begins with a 1 cm indent. The column is 27-lines deep (including the page navigation on top) with an average of 14-17 words per line. The leading and word spacing is generous and gives an overall clarity to the page. There are no full stops at the end of paragraphs, but a large full stop is used to separate sentences within a paragraph. The typesetting follows a simple structure, like that of an informal handwritten manuscript. The page navigation and footnotes are set in the 9pt *Nasta'liq* font, and separated from the main text block by a thin column-wide line. The chapter title is in the larger *Tulut* font (*Allam*, 32pt) or sometimes using an engraved *Nasta'liq* sort (for words like *Muqaddima*, *Mulḥaq*). The title is separated from the main text block by a centrally aligned thin (line) fleuron, and similar ornament marks the end of chapters (often placed under the text centrally aligned in the text block). The book ends with a content page, followed by bilingual text of notes and corrections in Arabic and French. A lithographic image of a sample page from the original manuscript is shown, and a two-column comparison between the texts of the 'Paris Manuscript' (BNF, MS 3465) and the printed edition by De Sacy (1816),³³⁴ are set side-by-side in two columns, and separated by a thin vertical line, and the variation between the texts are numbered and placed below these two columns. The editor Cheikho clarifies in his introduction the source of his manuscript that closely resembles that of De Sacy and states that his edition is based on the 'oldest dated Arabic manuscript' (*aqdam nash'a 'arabiyya mahṭūṭa mu'arraḥa*).³³⁵ The final page of the book is the title page in French.

—*The 1926 edition of Kalīla wa-Dimna*. A major difference with the earlier edition is that this edition dated 1926 seems to follow an older design that is decidedly more in line with Islamic book tradition and ornamentation. Namely, the cover and title page are the same design, but the cover has a thin geometric decorative frame, whereas the title-page text block is framed by a thick ornamental frame (both are constructed from smaller units). The main differences in the design are in using letters to mark the pages of the introduction between two Islamic parenthesis (with small rosettes). The new *Ruq'a* font is introduced for the editor's name (on the cover and title page)

³³⁴ Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy, *Calila et Dimna, ou Fables de Bidpai: Précédées d'un mémoire sur l'origine de ce livre, et sur les diverses traductions qui en ont été faites dans l'Orient, et suivies de la Moallaka de Lébid, en arabe et en français*, Paris, 1816; edition of the oldest illustrated manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France [BNF], MS arabe 3465, probably Syria, ca. 1220) with an abridged version of the text. Cf. "KALILA WA DEMNA i. Redactions and circulation," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. Web. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kalila-demna-i>. Last consulted: 1 June 2016. Cf. Dominique Clévenot, "Peintures," *L'art du livre arabe, du manuscrit au livre d'artiste*. Marie-Geneviève Guesdon, Annie Vernay-Nouri, eds. (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2001) 113-114.

³³⁵ This edition was made based on a manuscript found in the library of the Pacha Nūri al-Kīlānī in Hamā, dating from 1200 H. and copied by Muḥammad 'Alī bin Muḥammad al-Armāwī (c. 1339 AD). Cf. P. L. Cheikho S.J., "Muqaddima," *Kalīla wa-Dimna, Aqdam Nash'a Mahṭūṭa Mu'arraḥa* (Beirut: Al-Maṭba'a al-Kāṭūlikiyya lil-Ābā' al-Yasū'iyyīn, 1905) 5. For further reading on the various editions, additions and corrections, *ibid.* "KALILA WA DEMNA i. Redactions and circulation," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. Web. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kalila-demna-i>. Last consulted: 1 June 2016. Cf. Bernard O'Kane, *Early Persian Painting: Kalila and Dimna Manuscripts of the Late Fourteenth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003).

and for the preface title. The main text uses the accented *Stambūlī* font, which gives a dense text block. The book ends with a dictionary of terms, set in two columns separated by a thin vertical line, and the words to be defined are sandwiched between two small rosettes, in order to differentiate them from the definition text. The content page is more structured, with the main chapter set in a larger font than the stories within that chapter. The latter are also indented 10mm from the text block for further emphasis.

—*The 1947 edition of Kalīla wa-Dimna*. This edition follows the same design as the 1920s edition with the exception of different frame designs for the cover and the title page (both being equal in size and level of ornamentation). The other addition is the word *Kitāb* in a *Nasta‘līq* engraved sort above the book title (also in *Nasta‘līq*). The use of the *Nasta‘līq* types maybe referencing the Persian/Indian origins of the story, and in addition the thick line characteristic of this calligraphic style makes it appropriate for titling and creates a welcome contrast to the lighter *Nash* style fonts.

—*The 1973 and 1980 editions of Kalīla wa-Dimna*. These editions mark a major shift in design trend. The cover is fully illustrated with the title, and publisher’s information is hand-lettered. It is similar in design style to the *Alf Layla wa-Layla* covers of the 1950s. The cover design is decidedly ‘oriental’, with a stylized illustration of a domed black doorway filling the whole cover. The title of the book is hand-lettered in a *Tuluṭ* style, centrally aligned at the top with the small word *kitāb* above it, and the Imprimerie Catholique name (*al-Maṭba‘a al-Kāthulīkiyya*) in *Ruq‘i* style at the bottom, both framed by the frame of the doorway. The cover is printed in two colors, dark blue and light lime-green. The title page is printed in black and carries only (centrally aligned in the middle of the page) the title of the book, *Kitāb Kalīla wa-Dimna*, with the word *kitāb* above it. The main text is in the accented *Stambūlī* font and the titles for the foreword and introduction are in *Nasta‘līq* style. The text block is no longer set inside a frame. The page navigation at the top includes on the inner margin side the title of story, and the outer margin side the page number with a thin line that extends in between. The footnotes at the bottom are separated from the main text by a short 20mm-wide thin line—a typesetting convention still used in typesetting and page layouts of standard Arabic books.

—*The 1973 and 1980 editions of Kalīla wa-Dimna*. These editions are far more illustrative and mix different styles of illustration or ornamentation in their design, with a more childlike look in their overall design. The cover is the most contemporary in design, it has front and back covers with an illustration (a collage of different illustrations from a manuscript from *Dār al-Kutub al-Lubnāniyya*). The illustration extends over the spine to the back cover, taking up one-third of the back cover but leaving sufficient space for the column of text that describes the content of the

book. The name of the publisher (Dār al-Mašriq, year and place of publication) are place centered at the bottom under this column of text. The lettering on the front cover is a floriated Kufic lettering (bold and larger for the title, thin and smaller for the word *kitāb* above). It is printed in 4-color offset on a white back ground. The inside pages are a mix of previous designs and new additions. The previous version title page (of the 1960s edition) is used as a half title page. Then it is used in two colors on the title page (in black and red) with the rest of the information of editor's name, edition number, publisher's name and logo, registration and place and date of publication all hand-lettered in both *Nash* and *Ruq'i* styles. The whole is centrally aligned inside a frame with cartoonish illustrations of the heads of Kalila and Dimna with various facial expressions. The text's typesetting is the same as the 1960s edition with the exception that all the chapter headlines are now contained in an illustrated or ornamental square-shaped cartouche (the same width as the text block), also printed in black and red, with the chapter heading in white *Nash* calligraphy over a black background. The titles of the introduction(s) and preface are also hand-lettered in *Nasta'liq* style and printed in red. The overall text is more crisp and the ornaments are more delicate sorts used for chapter endings (e.g. the rosettes in the dictionary section are reduced in size).

The use of illustrations was reserved for texts of a more scientific, technical or popular nature, however, we have also come across illustrations in dictionaries and encyclopedias. In the 1920s history books series of al-Bustānī (*Ala 'Ahd al-Amīr* and *Tārīḥ Lubnān*), illustrations are placed on their own page separately from the text, with caption text centered underneath. They are printed in black (as engravings or lithographs). When the images are small they are dropped into the text block off-center, with the text wrapping round on three sides, and the illustration left-aligned with the outer edge of the text block. The design changes in the series of popular tales not only corresponded with changing tastes and the aesthetic trends of each respective period, but they inevitably changed the way these texts were read and perceived. As time goes by (and because it became easier to integrate image and text seamlessly on the page), the use of ornaments and illustrations became more prominent, and was used to create a visual identity that placed the tales within a 'stereotypically Arabian' or cultural context. Hence the text lost its typographic literary look for a more popular (visually intriguing) appearance. It was made to appeal to the sensual rather than the cerebral experience of the text—one that engages the reader's inner imagination and visualization of the narrative.

1.3.6.3.3. Arabic classical literature and poetry

The series of classical texts such as *Kitāb 'Ilm al-Adab* (1886, 1890, 1923, 1926, 1986), *Mağānī al-Adab* (1900, 1946, 1954), *al-Mağānī al-Ḥadīṭa* (1993), *Mir'āt al-Mağānī* (1901), *Rawā'ī' al-Adab* (1930,

1980), *Dīwān Abī al-ʿAtāhiya* (1914), have for a major part retained their look with minimal change over the years.

—*Cover, title page, spines.* The cover and title page contain the same information, and are designed in the same way with the exception that the border framing the text on the cover is often a simple two-line frame, whereas the title page's frame is more decorative. This tradition has been carried through from the conventions of Arabic manuscript books (that often had engraved leather covers). The cover is printed on a colored board, whereas the title page is printed on the normal paper stock. The title of the books was often composed of two rhyming parts, sometimes the first part of the title is set larger in size than the second part which looked like a subtitle. This is evident in the series of *ʿIlm al-Ādāb*. The text hierarchy on the cover and title page is clear; the title is bolder and considerably larger than the rest, often an engraved calligraphic script. The volume or series name and the author (in this case the publisher's name since the author is unknown) are set in the larger *Stambūlī* type (unaccented 22pt). A floral motif—and more often a symmetrical fleuron with a medallion containing a monogram of the Jesuit Imprimerie Catholique (IHS)³³⁶, or a large medallion with this monograph as can be seen on the series of *Mağānī al-Adab* from the 1900s—separated the title and author's name from the rest of the information such as publication date, edition, and legal registration. This text appears in the smaller *Beirūtī* (*Beyrouthin*) font, in 9pt size. The whole is centrally aligned within the frame and with a generous leading that gives each part of the information the appropriate emphasis. The spines of the series often carried the series title, the volume number and a motif that unified the books in the series.

The cover design became more important and elaborate from the 1930s onward. This could point to the fact of the growing publishing industry in Beirut and therefore the growing competition. The Imprimerie Catholique had to compete with other academic publishers in selling their books and having them stand out in bookstores. Another reason is that book covers had to convey not only a sense of authority and reliability, but also visual aesthetic and appeal in order to compete and cater to the growing number of sophisticated readers in Beirut. Another interesting development is the more elaborate yet economic concept of using the same design for the cover within one series and only making minor variations in color, especially for the economic pocket book size (12 cm x 16.6 cm), for the literary classics series *Al-Rawāʿī*. This marks a clear shift in attention from internal page architecture and design to the more varied and expressive cover designs. This trend persists to this day in Arabic (and international) book publishing practices.

The design of covers of classical Arabic literature series (as well as the Arabian popular tales) from the 1930s until the 1970s were decidedly orientalist. They combined elaborate Islamic

³³⁶ Acronym meaning Jesus Christ Saviour.

ornamentation (implying architectural or Islamic book decoration) with calligraphic titles or expressive Arabic lettering. Eventually the cover carried the logo and name of the later independent publishing house, Dār al-Mašriq. In the 1980s to the 1990s the book covers became austere, minimalist, often with large Arabic lettering in expressive styles on white backgrounds (sometimes one flat color was introduced as background color). The inside pages sometimes were reprints from old typeset pages; a film reproduction of handset and letterpress printed sheets, thus creating an aesthetic disjunction between the old style of the inner pages and the modern style of the cover's design. The reason is plainly an economic one, moreover, it further highlights the separation between the cover design (and designers) and the typesetter/printer responsible for the composition of the books' text and inner content. This tradition persists to this day even in the Western publishing world, for textbooks and literary/intellectual works.

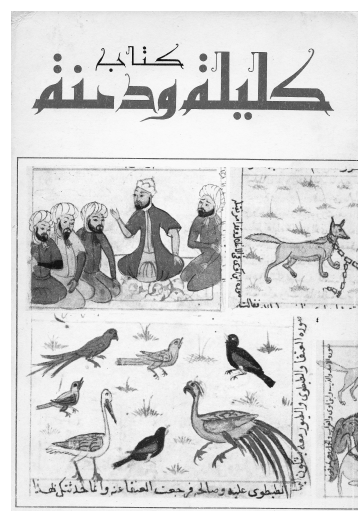
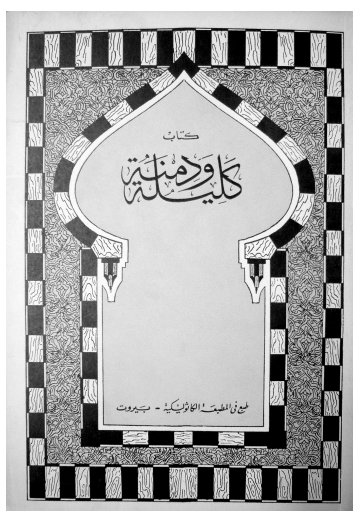
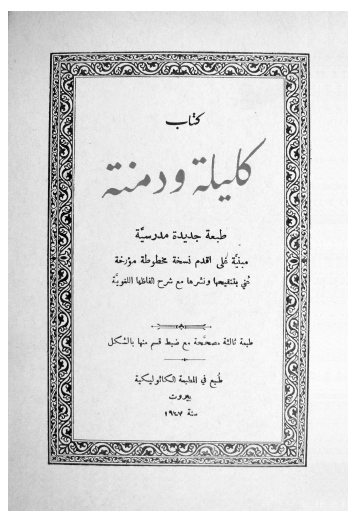
—*Text pages.* The text is set justified in one-column, in a large *Nash* font (unaccented *Stambūlī* 22pt) within a simple line frame with floral corner-fleurons. The footnote text is at the bottom inside the frame, set in the same font at a smaller size (in the unaccented 9pt *Beirūtī* (*Beyrouthin*) font), and separated by a thin line the width of the text column. The page numbering appears on top of the page centered inside the frame, in the same unaccented 9pt *Beirūtī* (*Beyrouthin*) font. This font is also used within the text block when the text is a citation from an original of another author. It is used to emphasize the difference between the original text (poetry or prose) and the commentary on it set in the larger *Nash* by the contemporary author/editor of the book. Poetry is set into columns centered within the text block and indented 5 mm from both sides from the main column width. Each paragraph begins with a 1 cm indent for the main text (and 8 mm for footnotes or citations). The column is 28-lines deep for text set in the smaller font size of 9pt (including book navigation and footnotes), and 18-19 lines deep for the larger text size (including navigation and footnotes), including the footnotes when they occur, with an average of 8-14 words per line (depending on type size). The leading and word spacing is generous, with baseline for the smaller text at half size as that of the larger text size, and gives an overall clarity to the page architecture, aiding easy 'silent' reading. Some extended characters, swashes and *kashidas* (*mašq*) are used for justification. Punctuation is further developed along European conventions. The chapter heading is centered, set in a rather larger and bolder calligraphic hand engraved into one single printing sort, which varied in style from one series to the other, sometimes in accented *Nash*, *Tuluṭ* or *Nasta'liq*. All chapters end with an illustrative floral motif. The frames around the text block were simple double-line frames, with the exception of special editions of poetry (*Dīwāns*). This series has more ornamental borders; a single line border with floral corner motifs, and elaborate floral wreath above the title marking the beginning of a chapter.

In the 1920s the trend of placing a frame around the text block is dropped (but often it was kept in reprints on the book cover and title pages, following the same design as the earlier editions). For original books published during this period the covers were more typographically austere, the name of the author was more prominently placed at the top of the page (and sometimes underlined). This marked a new emphasis which portrays the importance of an author in advancing the purchasing value of a book, and implies more familiarity of readers with the leading authors of their time, and therefore a more sophisticated readership.

—*Fihris (content page, index) and colophon.* The *fihris* (content page) is placed at the end of the book, the word *fihrist* is an engraved titling sort in *Nasta'liq* style. The rest of the text is set in the *Stambūlī* font (in text and footnote sizes) and the page numbers in the 9pt bold *Beirūtī* (*Beyrouthin*) font. The page numbering and title (and subtitle) are placed at the top of the page within the double-line frame around the text block. The listing is set into two columns divided by a thin vertical line which divides the text block into two equal parts.

From the 1920s onwards, the content page was moved from the back of the book to become, with the colophon, part of the front matter of the book design. This indicates a more structured approach and offers more flexibility in the reading of the text; a reader could choose from the start which parts to read first. This gave books the possibility for nonlinear or sequential reading, and it also provided an easier way to refer to the text and retrieve particular information, or reread particular sections. It provided a structure that left room for individual reading of the text, and therefore individual interpretation or understanding.

—*Proportions and margins.* In general, these pocket-size books had economic margins that left sufficient white space around the text but not too much. The regular proportional dimensions were 1:1 (inner margin), 1:1.5 (top and bottom margin), and 1:3 (outer margin), with the top margin containing the page navigation and page numbers.



Book covers of *Kalila wa-Dimna*, published by the Imprimerie Catholique in Beirut, dating (left to right) from 1947, 1950s, 1973.

1.3.7. Conclusion

The mission of the Imprimerie Catholique and its publishing of educational Arabic textbooks (literary classics, dictionaries and journals) made it a role model for the new scholarly publishers and helped raise the standard of book design and printing in the Levant. Its long service as printing press and publisher testifies to its success in producing and maintaining high quality production of intellectual books in the Arabic language and making its affiliate institutions in Beirut, specially the Bibliothèque Orientale, an internationally reputed center for Oriental Studies, and an exemplary model for such institutions in the Arab Middle East. As academic publishers, the Imprimerie Catholique made their mark by publishing book series of classical Arabic literature as well as the literary journal *Al-Mašriq*. They also published cheap pocketbook paperbacks of popular literature like *Kalīla wa-Dimna* and *Alf Layla wa-Layla* (1001 Arabian Nights). They also produced a series of dictionaries and lexicographic works—some fashioned after the scholastic illustrated Larousse dictionaries.

An observation of samples of early printed books from the Imprimerie Catholique reveal a modern look of text composition, a clarity of the layout with generous margins, word spacing and line spacing (leading). The style of ornaments and fleurons, and the European style of the text composition, gave many of the late nineteenth century publications a balanced mix of European design with a reference to classical Arabic manuscript compositional traits. For example, the use of the conventional *Basmala* on the opening page of the book, whereby the text is slightly changed to avoid the Quranic wording; the Islamic *bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm* is then replaced by the Christian version *bismillāh al-ḥayy al-azalī*. Later this tradition is dropped and the customary *Basmala* is only used for the poetry series of *Dīwāns*. By marrying European (namely French) book aesthetics with Arabic manuscript conventions, they established some lasting Arabic book design conventions used in Lebanon and the Arab world to this day. Their publications clearly portray the Jesuits' mission and their image as the well-informed and educated Orientalist. Their books have a distinctly ornamental quality that corresponds to the Catholic Church's aesthetics of decoration and visual spectacle, and at the same time is not in the least foreign to Ottoman Islamic tastes of the time. The books were visually seductive and provided a model for intellectual Arabic publications to come. The texts were clearly structured, the language was carefully edited and corrected, and the classical design and layout visually valorized the text and emphasized its importance. These were meant to be educational books—even when they dealt with topics such as popular science, history or classical tales.

1.4. Conclusion: The forefathers of twentieth century Arabic book design

Both the American Protestant missionaries and the Jesuits put books (education and publishing) at the center of their respective missions and activities. The American Missionaries aimed to reform the indigenous population and bring them to the ‘true’ expression of Christian faith, whereas the Jesuits strove to consolidate the relation between the indigenous population and the European Roman Catholic Church and uphold their place in the larger Arab region and its cultures. The American Press publications precipitated liberal thinking and contributed to the Arab *Nahḍa* movement. The Imprimerie Catholique on the other hand, further nurtured this cultural development educating and delivering a new generation of thinkers that became the founding fathers of the new independent Lebanese State who contributed to this emerging nation modern and unique identity.³³⁷

Each of these presses in their own way contributed to modernity in the Arab world, each sowed the seeds for generations to come and should be recognized as the forefathers of twentieth century book design and publishing. On the level of visual design—especially typography—they both instigated renewal and raised the standards in book design and production. They helped spread education to a larger part of the population and increased literacy and readership.³³⁸ The competition between these two rival presses led to the development of a diversity in typographic invention and printed Arabic book design conventions. Both invented new visual styles and techniques to typeset Arabic text in a legible and aesthetically pleasing manner. They were obliged to adapt (and respect) some of the Arabic manuscript compositional and calligraphic conventions—especially in the early transitional period at the end of the nineteenth century when printed books were less familiar to the educated few and print culture was not yet mainstream.

Unlike the American Press who’s activities in Arabic book publishing waned with the end of the nineteenth century, the Imprimerie Catholique remained operational as a printing press until the late twentieth century. This fact caused some of the Imprimerie Catholique’s invented and appropriated typographic conventions to become the model for subsequent publishers, printing presses, and designers. In the following chapters the work of a select group of publishers from different periods of the twentieth century is discussed, thus revealing the level of invention of each and their adoption or rejection of the commonly accepted norms of book design (those set by the Imprimerie Catholique and to a lesser extent by its original rival the American Press).

³³⁷ Lebanon is referred to as “an independent state with an Arab face” (not an Arab State though it was one of the founding member of the Arab League). *Lubnān balad mustaqill dū waǧhin ‘arabī*.

³³⁸ This legacy is felt to this day in Lebanon that ranks amongst the highest literacy levels in the Arab World—and according to UNICEF statistics of 2008-2011—with an average of 89.6% of adult literacy.