‘The Tale of the Cairene and the Countryman’:
A Late Judaeo-Arabic Narrative Revisited*

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Abstract
This short article offers a revised transcription and English translation of Qiṣṣat al- maṣrī wa- l- rīfī ‘The Tale of the Cairene and the Countryman’ as found in AIU VII.C.16, with grammatical notes. This new edition of the text demonstrates that Goitein’s (1972) rendering of the manuscript concealed significant orthographic features, which indicate a later date of composition than Goitein proposed. Since its publication, Goitein’s (1972) edition of AIU VII.C.16 has been widely used among students and scholars of Judaeo-Arabic as a guideline for dating other Judaeo-Arabic texts of the Ottoman era. The fragment’s importance in contemporary scholarship continues, rendering a revised edition an indispensable resource for future generations of Judaeo-Arabic scholars.

Keywords: Judaeo-Arabic – Middle Arabic – orthography – folk tales – Qiṣṣat al- maṣrī wa- l- rīfī

1. Introduction

Among the many treasures of the renowned Cairo Genizah collections1 are a number of Judaeo-Arabic (henceforth JA) and Arabic-script folk narratives. These range from renditions of ‘Alf layla wa- layla ‘A Thousand and One Nights’ to adaptations of Qiṣṣas al- ‘anbiyā’ ‘The Tales of the Prophets’. In the following article, a new transcription and English translation of the JA text Qiṣṣat al-maṣrī wa- l-rīfī ‘The Tale of the Cairene and the Countryman’ as found in the fragment AIU VII.C.16 is offered, prefaced by a brief discussion of its treatment in recent scholarship, and followed by a summary of its most notable orthographic features.2

* This work was funded by the generous support of the Leverhulme Trust in the form of a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship. – I am indebted to Prof. Guth and the reviewers for their invaluable suggestions. That being said, any errors herein are mine alone.

1 For accessible introductions to the Cairo Genizah and its contents, see REIF 2000; HOFFMAN & COLE 2011.

2 I limit myself here to a discussion of the text’s key orthographic features. However, the text contains
The tale comprises a dialogue between a Cairene (maṣrī) and a countryman (rīfī), in which each argues for the superiority of their respective abodes, while disparaging the other’s. The narrative is almost exclusively reported as direct discourse, with only intermittent third-person narration, such as ‘then the countryman replied…’ (passim). It contains a high degree of Egyptian colloquial Arabic (henceforth ECA) features (Goitein 1927: 258). Although the focus of this paper is linguistic, the text’s contents also offers invaluable insight into the rural/urban divide in Egypt during the Ottoman era; modes of dress; and dietary habits of the fallāhīn and Cairo’s urban communities or, at the very least, the stereotypes associated with these communities at that time.

In 1972, Shelomo Dev Goitein, the doyen of Genizah studies, published an edition of AIU VII.C.16, alongside a translation into English. On the advice of Meir Benayahu, Goitein dated the text to the seventeenth century (1972: 275). Since its publication, Goitein’s transcription of this text has informed many studies on Late JA folk tales, from its adaptation of the Hebrew script for the purposes of JA in the later period to its use as a guide for dating other JA folk tales.

However, as Benjamin H. Hary noted in both his PhD thesis (1987) and later work (1992), Goitein’s transcription does not do full justice to the orthographic idiosyncrasies of the original text (Hary 1992: 87, n.51). In producing another transcription of the fragment, which more faithfully renders the original, I aim to remedy this oversight, and in doing so, give full voice to the text’s late JA features. I also contend that these orthographic features point to a later (eighteenth century) date.

3 In addition to ECA, I also refer to Modern Cairene Arabic (henceforth MCA) more specifically, and Classical Arabic (henceforth CA), where appropriate.

4 Judaeo-Arabic is generally categorised into three periods: early (ninth to tenth centuries CE); classical (tenth to fifteenth centuries); and late (fifteenth to nineteenth centuries) (KHAN 2007, 2018). For an alternative classification of Judaeo-Arabic, see HARY 1992, 2009. Late Judaeo-Arabic is known for its admixture of Hebrew loanwords, phonetic features, and continued classical Judaeo-Arabic features (HARY 1992: 86).

5 I am indebted to Prof. Hary for permitting me to publish this edition of AIU VII.C.16, and for his kindness and generosity in doing so.

6 I am grateful to Prof Geoffrey Khan and Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner who kindly discussed this text with me (Lent term, 2016), and who were receptive to my idea of a later date. I also thank Prof Geoffrey Khan, Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner and Dr Mohyi E. Maziad for reading this text with me in our JA reading group.
2. AIU VII.C.16: Text, transcription and translation

AIU VII.C.16 comprises one folio, with writing on both recto (22 lines) and verso (23 lines), and a catchword in the lower left-hand corner of the latter. In its extant form it is in good condition, with only a few lacunae, slight rubbing, and some staining. The opening phrases of the text are written in large, square script, while the remaining text is written in a smaller, more cursive script-style. This combination of script-styles is often encountered at the opening of eighteenth and nineteenth-century JA narratives (see for example, BnF Hébreu 583; NLI Cairo JC 104).

In what follows, a transcription of the original text, AIU VII.C.16, is placed beside a grapheme-for-grapheme transcription into Arabic script,7 and an English translation.

Where lacunae or rubbing obscure the reading, reconstructions in the transcription are indicated by square brackets [ ]. Instances in which the scribe or author added a formerly omitted letter are marked with curly brackets { }. Additions to the English translation—intended to ensure readability—are indicated by parentheses ( ).

**AIU VII.C.16, F.1 recto**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Arabic Transcription</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Let's begin with the writing of 'The Tale of the Cairene' and the Countryman</td>
<td>نبتدي بكتابت قصت ال مصري وال ريفي</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cairene said to the countryman, first(ly), the city is more desirable; there is marble of (all) shapes and colours, and every house has beauty. If you go to Bayn al-Qaṣrayn, each time, you will see a (great) spectacle, but as for the countryside, you will see nothing there</td>
<td>قال ال مصري لل ريفي اوول ال مدينة هي ارجا فيها ال روخام اشكال والووان وكل بيت فيها محجا ''وان كان تروح بين ال قصريين في كل حين نضور فورجه ''اما ال ريف لم نضور فيها غير ال</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but dogs, which run around, ruins, and heaps of rubbish, which pain the heart.' The countryman replied, 'I say—to my mind—that the city is no good—everything</td>
<td>كلاب الدي تجري وال خراييب وال كيمان منها قد داق صدر فقال ال ريفي افوه علا حاطري ان ال مدينة ما تفع وكلي شيء</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 In transcribing the JA text into Arabic graphemes, I aim to make the original text accessible to a wider audience interested in Middle Arabic. This practice was pioneered by DIEM (2014) and suggested to me by Dr Esther-Miriam WAGNER (in person).
there is expensive, and no one
there is satisfied; whoever lives
there is always complaining
about the narrowness of the
place. Every house you ask to
rent is already on a site
that is more expensive than the
last. And the loo! Its stench
stays with you, blinding (your)
sight!'
Then the Cairene
said, ‘At Bāb Zawīla,
I will show you something (that) will
amaze you—fruit and
legumes, and whatever
occurred to you—(you could)
take it! Seize it! And if you go
to the stationers,
you will see something there
that astonishes you! Whatever
you wish for, O countryman, I
can buy (it), and I can fill my
pockets (with it)! If you gave
me two hundred coins, I would
not live
in the countryside,
all
my life!’
The countryman replied, ‘What
lies you tell me about Cairo!
I only love the countryside; I
milk the cows and go
wandering about the estates. I
fill my saddlebag early® with
wheat, eggs
and butter, and then I return
home, O Cairene!’ The Cairene
said,
### F.1 verso

<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The countryman replied, ‘Get away from me! Stop these lies! I’ll tell you what my hammām is—it is when I wade into the lake! And whoever wears a clean, laundered shirt, they only need two thousand coins! And the cloth cap falls down (?) and on top of it is dandruff;</td>
<td>فقال ال ريفي قوم عني وبطل دل كدبها اقولك ابيش هو حامي لما احوض فل برك والدي بليس قميص مغسول سمكول ما عاووزو الا الفي سكه وال عومامه تتوطا لفكته آلا قشري وقبطريا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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9 ‘the turban’ (ECA: ‘ʿimāma, also ‘imma). The term may designate the turban in its entirety; ‘et aussi la piece d’etoffe seule.’ It is usually white, and made from muslin (Dozy 1845: 305–311). ‘ʿamāma is also recorded by KAZIMIRSKI (1860: 359), but I can find no record of ‘umāma as it is written here (see §3.4.1).

10 ʿawāq ‘cap’ (qāwuq, also qāwūq). ‘Une bonnet des docteurs de la loi musulmans’ (KAZIMIRSKI 1860: 836) (see also HAVA 1899: 626).

11 ʿawāq ‘a tie’ (ECA: šadd). According to DOZY, this refers to a strip of fine cotton tulle, which is tied around the turban to secure it (1845: 213–215).

12 ṣabīr ‘short’. KAZIMIRSKI states that this is an adjective indicating shortness (1860: 856). Its absence from DOZY’s (1845) work on clothes suggests that it does not refer to an item of clothing.

13 ‘dandruff’. GOITTA (1972: 261) interprets this word differently, transcribing it as ‘al ʿiqīrū ‘straw’ (for CA: qašša). However, I think it reads ‘al ʿiqīrū ‘dandruff’, which perhaps is also more apt in the immediate context. HARY also reads this as ‘dandruff’ (see 1992: 87, n.51).

14 ḥabtuw ʿal ḏairiyya ‘fine linen’, in which the grapheme ṭā for Arabic rā’ has simply been omitted by mistake (see KAZIMIRSKI 1860: 663).
Translation

(while I don) a fine linen (tunic), and on top of that (I wear) a hirsute smock. ’The Cairene

said, ‘If they gave me all the wealth (in the world) I would not live in the countryside. I would not suffer those conditions! Cairo will always be my home; it is better than anything else!

(Even) the fortunate man walks in the countryside barefoot, and from dawn (to dusk) he runs in the coldness and the frost, and he runs with all his might.’ Then the countryman replied, ‘If you gave me Cairo as my estate, I would not live there, all my life! And its stairs—I would not climb them!

Each seat in my house is under the heaven(s)—(this) is my estate. (Even) if I lived inside the (grandest) hall, I would feel as if I were wedged inside my own grave. If I died alone, no one would know!’ The Cairene said, ‘what happiness can you see in the countryside?

(In) Cairo, your eyes see it in these people—how many there are! And every(one) who comes and goes to and from Cairo is hurrying. And whatever you ask for, it is available,


Arabic Transcription

فو�피하 게 희리. "فاقل ال

معرى ول عطفوي جميع ال اموال

ما اسكون في ال ريف ولا

افاصي دل احوار ومصر دام

سوكتني هي احسن علا كل حال

وال سعيد يمشي قال ريف حافي

ونم بوكا يجري في ال برودا وال

فقال ال ريفي لو تعطوني مصر

اقطاعي ما اسكون فيها طول

عومري ولا سلامتها اطعهم

وكل فعده في صاري وال سما

منها اقطعا وياد سكنت

أصو ال

كأنه تستشب واحدها قري وان

مكت وردت قاتل مات على

يدي "فاقل ال مصري ايش

لك سعاده تضورها في ريف

مصري وتعطوني من في دل

خلاب طما أكثرهم وكي من

يدخلون في مصر ويخروج يجري

وما طلميو هوا موجود في ال


Text

(FOOTNOTE 19) شيرى "فاقل ال ما معرى ول عطفوي جميع ال اموال

ما اسكون في ال ريف ولا

افاصي دل احوار ومصر دام

سوكتني هي احسن علا كل حال

وال سعيد يمشي قال ريف حافي

ونم بوكا يجري في ال برودا وال

فقال ال ريفي لو تعطوني مصر

اقطاعي ما اسكون فيها طول

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(FOOTNOTE 15) في الأمازيغية، "fohqafa deh" يشير إلى "smock". كلا "guhba" و "giafba" يظهر في العربي. ومع ذلك، كان "giafba"(particularly common in ECA (DOZY 1845: 107–117).
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>immediately! Ask someone else (i.e. ask anyone)! The countryman replied,</td>
<td>حال اسال غيري &quot; في قال ال</td>
<td>ريفي لو كانت مصر تفشي ما</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘If Cairo were my bribe, I would not stay there a week! I would be</td>
<td>نظم فيها جومه وانحس ما</td>
<td>انستني ي اول افرز فجبر اموسم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imprisoned—I would not be given anything! And I would see a soldier with</td>
<td>اعطي شي وانضور جندي بديوس</td>
<td>انستني ي اول افرز فجبر اموسم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a club (in his hand) on top of a gely! Whatever was in my hand, they</td>
<td>فوق عدي/جديش ايش في</td>
<td>حال اسال غييري &quot; في قال ال</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would take, and this—as if I were as rich as Croesus— it would be spent.</td>
<td>ايدي باحدو وهادا لوكان معي مال فارون</td>
<td>يخرج وانا ما لم ادري &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And I don’t know what else!’ The Cairene said, ‘In Cairo, I have</td>
<td>شبيبين يا اختواني الى معز موجود</td>
<td>شبيبين يا اختواني الى معز موجود</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>something (that you don’t have), O my brothers! Goats are readily</td>
<td>وهو حصصيت ال انساسي وال سعيد</td>
<td>كان لي اصر ا آلمبلا والأسراع المرا لا ما هوت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>available with mutton. But this is a scarce thing for you in the</td>
<td>فل ريف يدبح زجلوليين بری وفرحتين او ووزه ويشتهي</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>countryside, but it is [... the people and (even) the fortunate man</td>
<td>ولحميت نمهمت</td>
<td>ولحميت نمهمت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the countryside sacrifices two wild pigeons and two chickens or a</td>
<td>فل بقري فقال ال ريفي عندي</td>
<td>لا بكر &quot; پکال آل رفي عندي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goose, while he craves beef.’ The countryman replied, ‘I have chicken—</td>
<td>وهو حصصيت ال انسي وال سعيد</td>
<td>لا بكر &quot; پکال آل رفي عندي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(it is) cheap in (my) village, and the duck is plump (and it retains</td>
<td>فل ريف يدبح زجلوليين بری وفرحتين او ووزه ويشتهي</td>
<td>عقصرت مي ا لدائمي وان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much of the fat. And (as for) pigeons, they are better than</td>
<td>ولحميت نمهمت</td>
<td>ووز يسمين يبغا كابر ال ادهاين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(beef)... ’</td>
<td>ولحميت نمهمت</td>
<td>انزلابير هوه ينفو اخير من</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘The Tale of the Cairene and the Countryman’: A Late Judaeo-Arabic Narrative Revisited
3. Notes on the Text’s Orthography

3.1. Continuation of Classical Orthography

3.1.1. Ṣadeh + dot for ḍād
As in classical JA spelling, the Arabic grapheme ḍād is represented in this late JA text with a ṣadeh, above which sits a diacritical dot (צ), e.g., פִּי אל צייעאת ‘in the estates’ (recto, line 18); לְחַמְת אל צי ‘mutton’ (lit. ‘the meat of the sheep’) (verso, line 19).

3.1.2. Tav for tāʾ marbūṭa in construct state
In another continuation of classical JA orthography, when the first term of the construct state ends in a tāʾ marbūṭa (ة) it is denoted phonetically with tav rather than its orthographic equivalent heh, e.g., בְּכַתאבת צעייעאת ‘with the tale of the Cairene…’ (recto, line 1); לְחַמְת אל בּקרי ‘beef’ (lit. ‘the meat of the cow’) (verso, lines 21–22). Although this phonetic representation of tāʾ marbūṭa in construct state occurs in classical JA, it becomes notably more common in late JA folk narratives and letters (Connolly 2018b: 60).

3.1.3. Tanwīn
The preservation in classical JA writings of tanwīn ‘alif on (i) adverbials, (ii) some commonly occurring ‘short’ nouns, such as ‘אḥad ‘someone’ and šay ‘something’, and (iii) after an indefinite noun followed by an adjective, prepositional phrase or attributive clause is well-documented (Blau 1981: 167–202). In the first two instances, tanwīn ‘alif is most commonly expressed with the Hebrew grapheme ‘alef, e.g., וָאֵין ‘someone’, while in the latter, an independent morpheme, comprising ‘alef + nun (i.e., ע) occurs (see Baneth 1945–46; and Blau 1981). In AIU VII.C.16, we find three instances in which tanwīn ‘alif is employed. In two of these, a solitary nun is attached to the indefinite noun ‘aḥad when used in the negative construction ‘there is no'/there is not’ (לָא אֲחָד פֵיהֶנַי ‘and no one there is satisfied’ (recto, line 9); ואֵין מָתַח מַעָלַא בְּכַתאבת צייעאת ‘and if I died alone, no one would know of my situation!’ (verso, lines 11–12). So, rather than the accusative without tanwīn one would anticipate in CA (i.e. לָא ‘אֲחָד ‘there is no one…’), the nun used here indicates that the indefinite (accusative) marker -(a)n is intended; the phrase would have been pronounced וָאֵין ‘אֲחָד dan (see Blau 1981: 29). In the third example, the ‘alef + nun particle is attached to the indefinite noun šay: ‘פקִיהם אל ‘אֵין וֶשֶם ‘šay ‘something…’ Then the Cairene said, ‘In Cairo, I have something…’ (verso, lines 18–19). Unlike in the examples drawn on by Blau (1981) and Baneth (1945–1946), in this example, ‘alef + nun act as a bound morpheme rather than an independent entity, and are not followed by an adjectival, prepositional phrase or attributive clause.

3.1.4. Genitive case ending
In the final few lines (20–23) of verso, the Hebrew grapheme yod, expressing the genitive case ending -i, is found on four definite nouns, which are either in a prepositional phrase or

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16 The format of this paper follows that found in Khan’s articles on late JA letters (see, for example KHAN 2006).
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The second term of the construct state. The *plene* spelling of the genitive case ending grants us insight into the rhythm in which the tale would have been recited:

The plene spelling of the genitive case ending grants us insight into the rhythm in which the tale would have been recited:

‘... וְזִיל שְׁכִיָּה וּפֶל רֶיפֶּה וַּהוּ אֶל בְּעֶלִי...’

We note that the defnite article is consistently written separate to the noun or adjective it modifies in AIU VII.C.16, e.g., ‘... וַאֲלָל כַּרְאִיב וַאֲלָל כְּיָמָן...’

‘... וַאֲלָל כַּרְאִיב וַאֲלָל כְּיָמָן...’

3.2. Deviations from Classical JA Orthography

3.2.1. The definite article as an independent entity

As in classical JA and CA, the definite article is written in full (אָל), irrespective of whether the following consonant is coronal or dorsal. However, in a deviation from classical JA spelling practice, the definite article is consistently written separate to the noun or adjective it modifies in AIU VII.C.16, e.g., ‘... וַאֲלָל כַּרְאִיב וַאֲלָל כְָּיֵמָן...’ ‘... וַאֲלָל כַּרְאִיב וַאֲלָל כְָּיֵמָן...’ ‘... וַאֲלָל כַּרְאִיב וַאֲלָל כְָּיֵמָן...’ ‘... וַאֲלָל כַּרְאִיב וַאֲלָל כְָּיֵמָן...’

3.2.1.2. Independent preposition *fī* (CA: *fī*) + definite article

Another feature often noted in analyses of late JA texts is the writing of the independent preposition *fī* (CA: *fī*) as a bound morpheme, when preceding the definite article. This phenomenon has various manifestations in late JA: the definite article and the independent preposition fuse, forming a separate entity, which retains either the *ʿālef* of the definite article (פָּאָל), or the *yod* of the independent preposition (פָּיל), or neither (פָּל) (Connolly 2018b: 98–100). In AIU VII.C.16, we encounter the latter, e.g., ‘... וַאֲלָל כַּרְאִיב וַאֲלָל כְָּיֵמָן...’ ‘... וַאֲלָל כַּרְאִיב וַאֲלָל כְָּיֵמָן...’ ‘... וַאֲלָל כַּרְאִיב וַאֲלָל כְָּיֵמָן...’

This representation of the preposition *fī* and the definite article may indicate ECA/MCA pronunciation of the definite article as [ɪ] (CA: /al-/): [fɪ-i].

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17 Referred to in Arabic grammars as the ‘sun’ and ‘moon’ letters (*al-ḥurūf al-šamsiyya wa-l-ḥurūf al-qamariyya*, respectively).

18 For a more detailed explanation of the possible origins of the separation of the definite article from the noun it modifies in late Judaeo-Arabic, see Connolly 2018b: 101–102.

19 In one instance, the definite article and independent preposition are represented as פָּל רֶיפֶּה ‘in the countryside’ (verso, line 7). However, the *peh* appears to have been initially omitted, and then inserted at a later date.
However, it is also worth noting that the merging of these two entities is not always found here. The two are also regularly written as separate entities, e.g., ﺑﺪل ﺑﻲ ‘in the circumstance’ (verso, lines 14–15); ﺑﺪل ﺑﻲ ‘in the estates’ (recto, line 18).

3.2.2. Representation of ‘alif maqṣūra
In addition to functioning as the long vowel /ī/ and the consonant /y/, the grapheme yāʾ is also used alongside ʾalif ṭawīla (i.e., ١) to represent the long vowel /aː/ in CA. This letter was referred to by the Arab grammarians as ʾalif maqṣūra—‘the ʾalif that can be shortened’ (Wehr 1994: 900). During the classical JA period, the equivalent Hebrew graphical form yod was generally employed to denote ʾalif maqṣūra (י for /aː/). This use of yod continues into the late JA period (see Connolly 2018b: 60–61), but it is frequently supplanted by ʾalef when representing ʾalif maqṣūra in many late JA folk tales and letters (ibid.), a trend that is encountered consistently in AIU VII.C.16, e.g., ﺑﺪل ﻨأ ‘on’ (recto, line 8; verso, line 6); ﺑﺪل ﻨأ ‘more expensive’ (recto, line 10); ﺑﺪل ﻨأ ‘it remains’ (verso, line 23); ﺑﺪل ﻨأ ‘more desirable’ (recto, line 4). Yod is reserved exclusively for the long vowel ʾī’, the consonant /y/, and the genitive case ending (see §3.1.4), e.g., ﺑﺪل ي ‘he runs’ (verso, lines 7, 8, 14); ﺑﺪل ﻨأ ‘he walks’ (verso, line 7).

3.2.3. Representation of tāʾ marbūta (non-contract state)
In classical JA, non-construct state tāʾ marbūta is generally represented with its orthographic cognate heh, with and without additional supralinear dots. While heh is used for this purpose in AIU VII.C.16 (without the diacritical dots), it appears interchangeably with ʾalef, e.g., ﺑﺪل ﻦأ ‘two hundred coins’ (recto, line 15); ﺑﺪل ﻦأ ‘and from dawn (till dusk) he runs in the cold and the frost…’ (verso, lines 7–8).

3.2.4. Peh for fāʾ + diacritical dot
Another development in late JA orthography is the common inclusion of a diacritical dot or dash above peh for fāʾ, often accompanied by a shift in its graphical representation with a vertical tail, i.e., ﺗ (as in Hebrew orthography) to a curved tail, which descends below the line and then curves back upwards, i.e., ﺑ (perhaps in imitation of its Arabic equivalent (see Connolly 2018a; 2018b: 14–17 for more detailed discussions of this late JA orthographic development)). In AIU VII.C.16, these parallel burgeoning trends are apparent; peh for fāʾ is written with a supralinear diacritical dot in 26.8% of instances (ibid.: 14), and the grapheme’s tail curves upwards at the end in final form (ibid.: 16–17).

3.3. Evidence of ECA Pronunciation

3.3.1. Şadeh + dot for ḍād and ẓāʾ
The Arabic grapheme ẓāʾ is represented exclusively in AIU VII.C.16 with a šadeh + dot (ش) rather than a fet + dot, as is customary in classical JA, e.g., ﺑﺪل ﻦأ ‘you will see’ (recto, lines 6, 14; verso, lines 12, 13); ﺑﺪل ﻦأ ‘clean’ (recto, line 21). This is indicative of the merging of the pharyngealised interdental fricative /ðˤ/ with the pharyngealised dental-
alveolar stop /ð/, present in urban Maghribi Arabic dialects (Aguadé 2018: 44) and MCA (Watson 2002: 15).  

3.3.2. Taḥlīm and tarqīq

Taḥlīm is a term employed by the Arab grammarians to describe the diffusion of ‘emphasis’ from a single ‘emphatic’ phoneme to adjacent vowel(s) and consonant(s). The direction of this emphatic diffusion may be either regressive or progressive, affecting the pronunciation of an adjacent syllable or of an entire word (Davis 1995: 466; Watson 1999: 289–290; Davis 2009: 637). Tarqīq refers to the opposing phenomenon in which ‘emphasis’ is lost.

As Goitein notes, there are several instances of these two phenomena in AIU VII.C.16 (1972: 258). In the following examples, the use of sādeh + dot (š) to represent dāl suggests that the presence of the ‘secondary’ emphatic, the sonorant /r/ has caused the preceding /d/ to be realised as [dʰ] in both words, e.g., הירבדלט פ ‘in my home’ (verso, line 10) (CA: fi dārī); מראא ‘I wander…’ (recto, line 18) (CA: ‘adāra).

The representation of the initial letter of the following word with the Hebrew grapheme sin rather than sādeh (its orthographic cognate) may be indicative of the realisation of qāf as a glottal stop [ʔ], which is its general pronunciation in MCA, e.g., הירבדלט פ ‘and the frost’ (verso, line 8) (ECA: sa’a; CA: saq’a). The same may be said of the following word, הירבדלט ‘about the narrowness of…’ (recto, line 10) (ECA: dā’u; CA: ḏayqa, ḏīqa).

3.3.3. Evidence of ‘imāla

The raising of the long vowel /ā/ and short vowel /a/ towards /i/ and /i/ (referred to as ‘imāla), respectively, is a well-documented phenomenon in a number of spoken Arabic dialects (see Levin 1971).

3.3.3.1. The bound morpheme fa-

The CA particle fa- ‘so, thus’ appears frequently in this text preceding the 3.m.sg. suffix conjugation verb qāl(a) ‘he said’. In most instances, this bound morpheme is represented as an independent entity, comprising a peh and a yod (א), e.g., ולедь ‘then he replied…’ (recto, lines 11, 16, 19; verso, line 15). As in the preceding example, the use of yod here indicates a shift in the pronunciation of fa- > [fe- fi]. This representation of CA fa- is found in other late JA folk narratives (see, for example BnF Hébreu 583; Connolly 2018a)). Furthermore, in the vocalised JA text CUL T-S Ar.54.63, the bound morpheme fa- is vocalised with the Hebrew vowel ħireq /i/: הירבדלט ‘and he came… fi-sār (CUL T-S Ar. 54.63, 4r.) (CA: fa-ṣār)’ (example from (Khan 2010: 213) (Connolly 2018a).

3.3.3.2. ‘imāla in tā’ marbūta (construct state)

In AIU VII.C.16, there is one instance in which the feminine ending /a/ of a construct state’s first term is written with yod + tav: הירבדלט (the) meat of…(i.e. beef)’ (verso, line 24). This indicates that the pronunciation would be akin to [laḥmät - laḥmit] rather than

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20 MCA also has a voiced pharyngealised alevolar fricative reflex of ẓā’ that is not uncommon (Watson 2002: 15).
[lahmat], as one would expect in MCA. This is the sole instance of this representation of the ṭāʾ marbūṭa in construct state encountered in the extant text.\(^{21}\)

3.3.4. 3.m.sg. pronominal suffix

Another common development in the orthography of late JA letters and folk narratives is the phonetic representation of the 3.m.sg. pronominal suffix. This graphemic substitution—in which the Hebrew orthographic cognate heh is supplanted by vav—suggests the invariable colloquial pronunciation of /u/ for 3.m.sg. CA -hu/-hi, e.g., ḥādatu ‘his effort’ (verso, line 8) (CA: ǧuhdatu-hu); rīḥatu ‘its smell’ (recto, line 11) (CA: rīkatu-hu).

3.4. Rabbinic Hebrew Spelling Influence

3.4.1. Plene spelling of short vowel /u/

Plene spelling of short vowel /u/, represented with the Hebrew grapheme vav, is very common in this text.\(^{22}\) This tendency, prevalent in late JA texts of all genres, is attributed to the influence of Rabbinic Hebrew. For the most part, it indicates an adherence to ECA/CA pronunciation standards, e.g., ālā ‘the marble’ (recto, line 4); ālā ‘and the toilet’ (recto, line 11); ālā ‘I would not live there’ (verso, line 9); ṣāḥā ‘you ask’ (recto, line 10); ṣāḥā ‘my life’ (recto, line 16); ṣāḥā ‘how many of them there are!’ (verso, line 13); ṣāḥā ‘you will see a sight…!’ (recto, line 6).

In a few instances, the plene spelling of /u/ with vav reveals deviations from the common (and recorded) CA and ECA pronunciations of certain words, e.g., ālā ‘the marble’ (verso, lines 19, 21). It may or may not be significant that lāḥmat is found in the countryman’s speech, while lāḥmat is used for the Cairene’s speech (verso, lines 19, 21). It may have been the author’s intention to draw distinctions between the Cairene and the countryman’s pronunciations. By the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, the /u/ pronunciation of the feminine ending was prevalent and prestigious in Cairo, while the /i/ realisation was generally disparaged. There is evidence to suggest, however, that pausal ēmāla was heard in Cairo until the late nineteenth century (see ZACK 2016: 562).

\(^{21}\) It may or may not be significant that lāḥmat is found in the countryman’s speech, while lāḥmat is used for the Cairene’s speech (verso, lines 19, 21). It may have been the author’s intention to draw distinctions between the Cairene and the countryman’s pronunciations. By the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, the /u/ pronunciation of the feminine ending was prevalent and prestigious in Cairo, while the /i/ realisation was generally disparaged. There is evidence to suggest, however, that pausal ēmāla was heard in Cairo until the late nineteenth century (see ZACK 2016: 562).

\(^{22}\) Plene spelling of the short vowel /u/—and /i/ and /a/ to a lesser extent—becomes very common in late JA texts.
4. Summary

The contents of AIU VII.C.16 adheres to the general principles of late JA orthography (in so far as they are currently understood) in its continued use of some classical JA spelling practices, its high degree of phonetic features, revealing the influence of colloquial Arabic, and the discernible Hebrew spelling influences.

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