

AL-QAZWĪNĪ ON THE CHARACTERS OF ETHNIC GROUPS
IN HIS *ĀTĀR AL-BILĀD*

Zoltán Szombathy

Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest

It seems to be a natural phenomenon that every society seeks to describe its neighbours and grab the differences that identify these neighbours and set them apart from itself. In trying to do this, all human societies attach supposed "characteristics" to other ethnic groups, nations and races, and the Middle East is naturally not, and has never been, an exception to this rule. The whole of the supposed characteristics of another ethnic group ever tends to be made into a consistent image, or stereotype, of the group in question, for which I have used the term "character" in the title of this paper. The alleged characters of ethnic groups, both Muslim and otherwise, has been a recurrent, constant topic in mediaeval Arabic geographical writing and belles-lettres alike. The discussion on the characters and peculiarities of various nations usually went under the heading *ṭabā'ī al-bilād* or *ḥaṣā'īṣ al-bilād*, and precious few Arabic works on geography failed to spare some pages at least for this issue. The tableau of various ethnic groups' characters that emerges from the descriptions of Arabic geographical science and *adab* works has remained remarkably unaltered throughout the centuries. The characters of ethnic groups, as well as those of individuals, were as a rule perceived as hereditary, innate, and inclusive of both physical and mental features. According to mediaeval Arabic authors, nations differ in their mental faculties and morals as much as they do in their physical appearances. It must be, however, strongly emphasized here that this way of stereotyping did not ever turn into a rigid system of prejudices, let alone outright racist ideas, which were completely alien to the Islamic world view, so omnipresent in culture. No Arabic author made the assertion that any "characteristic" feature of a nation must be true and valid of every single individual of that nation. Their opinion is perhaps amply exemplified by what al-Ġāḥiẓ expressed in one of his *Rasā'il*:

"We are not going to say that there cannot exist a Turk who is not like what we have described. As a matter of fact, not every Greek is a sage, not every Chinese is a masterly artisan, and not every Bedouin is an outstanding poet. Nevertheless, these characteristics in these ethnic groups are more widespread, more perfect, more evident, and more conspicuous than in others" (al-Ġāḥiẓ: *Rasā'il* I, 73).

Stereotypes should of course be furnished with some *rational* explanation, or rather, an explanation that *looks* rational and acceptable. So as to make stereotypes seem reasonable, true and valid, they must be in some way or another "explained", "rationalized". My point is that mediaeval Arabic science usually offered two ways

of explaining alleged ethnic characteristics, and I will use the book titled *Āthār al-bilād*, written by al-Qazwīnī, typical as it is, to illustrate my point¹.

To start with, I have selected out the images of four ethnic groups as they appear on the pages of al-Qazwīnī's work. These four groups are the Nabateans (*Nabat*), the Berbers (*Barbar*), the Black Africans (*Sūdān*), and the Turks (*Turk*). Nabateans have always been reputed in Arabic literature, scientific and otherwise, as having a markedly negative type of character. They have as a rule been described by various authors as lowly, cowardly, stupid, treacherous, full of evil intent, perfidious, etc (an-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab* I, 283; Goldziher 1967: 145). al-Qazwīnī describes them in just exactly this light; and he has this story to account for their supposed character:

"The inhabitants of Iraq are called *Nabat*. It is reported that *Nabat* was the name of a very wicked man who perpetrated a great many crimes in the time of Solomon, son of David. Solomon therefore ordered that *Nabat* should be confined to prison. But the inmates of the prison, unable to bear *Nabat*'s constant lying, gossiping and war-mongering among his fellow-prisoners, asked for Solomon's help. Then Solomon ordered that *Nabat* should be fastened with chains and brought to the prison of evil demons (*šayātīn*). But lo! the *šayātīn* cried for help and said, "Oh Prophet of God, do not multiply the pains of imprisonment by exposing us to this *Nabat*!" So, Solomon thought that *Nabat* should be given some job in order to keep him from wrongdoing" (*Ātār* 281).

The exact goal of the job *Nabat* was given will perhaps be best left unsaid; the important point is that *Nabat*'s working partner was a prostitute, whom he, quite predictably, made pregnant. She then bore a child, whose offspring spread over Iraq and were called *Nabat*. al-Qazwīnī concludes his story thus: "This is why you can observe such a great deal of gossip, evil words and adultery among the Nabateans. It was a characteristic feature of their ancestor *Nabat*."

The next example of an explanation is the case of the Berbers, whose image in Arab eyes was also on the whole negative, but in a different sense from the former group. The reputed characteristics of the Berber nation are the following: coarseness, ruthlessness, wildness, fierceness, a barbaric lifestyle, love of combat and murder and pillage, primitiveness, with a fair amount of courage thrown in for good measure².

¹ I definitely do not want to discuss the point whether these explanations of "ethnic characters", or the very notion of "ethnic characters" for that matter, are true or not. It is of course assumed that all these notions are wholly false, and the question why they arose in the first place is not part of this study.

The choice of al-Qazwīnī and his work as the subject of this paper is not due to any particular originality in the book. Quite to the contrary, this work serves our purpose exactly because it is so much like a hundred others.

² See an-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab* I, 282, 283; Ibn Ḥawqal, *Šūra* 98; al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik* I, Book 2, 69, 71-2.

This image of the Berbers as ruthless barbarians was as generally accepted throughout the Middle Ages as the above caricature of the Nabatean. We know of an astonishingly great number of legends, fabrications, and myths concerning the origins of Berbers in mediaeval Arabic lore. al-Qazwīnī cites one of these legends, perhaps the most widespread of all, which claims that Berbers are the descendants of Goliath (*Ġālūt*). According to this legend, the people of Goliath fled to North Africa after David had killed their leader and father, and all the alleged negative attributes of the Berbers, especially their quick response to all sorts of heresy and false beliefs (*anwā' ad-dalālāt*), can be put down to this supposedly "historical" fact³. al-Qazwīnī does not say anything else in this matter, but other Arabic authors attribute these peculiarities of the Berbers to quite different reasons, like the influence of the planets Mars and Venus, as is stated in al-Hamdānī's *Ṣifa* (I, 40-1).

The case of Black Africans is perhaps the best-known of all these explanations on ethnic stereotypes. al-Qazwīnī, speaking of this theme, mentions two absolutely different explanations, and makes no judgement of his own, leaving it to the reader to decide which approach to favour and consider as correct. He states that all African Blacks are descended from Kūš, son of Kanʿān, son of Hām, son of Nūḥ (Noah). Then he briefly mentions the famous Biblical story, equally well-known in mediaeval Muslim science and folklore, according to which Noah once became pitifully drunk and lay down half-naked. Thereupon his son, Hām, peeped at him and was highly amused by what was to be seen, while Noah's two other sons, Sām and Yāfiṭ, covered up his nakedness. On regaining his senses, Noah cursed his son Hām, which resulted in the latter's colour turning into an ugly black. Hām's offspring are black to this day and they also are slaves to their cousins, the descendants of Sām and Yāfiṭ⁴. This is one explanation for the blackness and other distinctive features of Africans, but al-Qazwīnī offers another one, vigorously favoured by most of his contemporaries. He says that the black complexion of the skin of Africans is the result of their long exposure to the burning sun of their equatorial habitat (*Āṭār* 14). Another version of this explanation, mentioned among others by Ibn Qutayba, is that Black Africans acquire this colour by spending too much time boiling in the wombs of their mothers prior to birth (Ibn Qutayba, *Uyūn* II, 67). So, in either case, the effect of excessive heat accounts for their supposed characteristics, which are again almost exclusively negative: they are described as easily enslaved, cowardly, weak,

³ *Āṭār* 109. An obviously false ḥadīṭ is also mentioned here by the author, making the Prophet discredit the Berbers and describe them as wholly unfit for religious life.

⁴ *Āṭār* 14. The story was a very popular one, see for example Ibn al-Aṭīr, *Kāmil* I, Part 1, 31; Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif* 25-6. Ibn Ḥaldūn felt it necessary to refute this legend, which he did in *Muqaddima* I, 388-9.

ignorant, adulterous, careless, oblivious of consequences, and, to top all, ever happy and frivolous⁵.

The last example is that of the Turks, whose image among Arabic authors resembles in many ways that of the Berbers. They are also pictured as bloodthirsty, fierce, wild, untameable, competitive, born fighters⁶. For this image of the Turk, astrological reasons are provided by al-Qazwīnī, for he claims that the influence of the planet Mars is behind the Turk's fierceness, and their martial prowess and unresistable physical strength and stamina are due to their dwelling-place, which is the land of extreme chill and frost⁷. But al-Qazwīnī again offers a totally different explanation as well, saying that they are descended from Yāfit, son of Noah, whose offspring are almost exclusively wild inhabitants of the Northern wastes. The people of Gog and Magog are among these folk, and the Turks are closely related to this uncanny nation, who are supposed to be the destroyers of this world (*al-mufsidūn fī l-ard*). al-Qazwīnī even claims that Yāğūğ wa-Māğūğ, that is, Gog and Magog, are a tribe of Turks, or else Turks are a tribe of Yāğūğ wa-Māğūğ (*Ātār* 416, 400). al-Qazwīnī does not press this claim beyond that, but another author, notably al-Idrīsī in his *Nuzhat al-muštāq*, even elaborates on this statement and claims that when Alexander the Great invaded the lands of Yāğūğ wa-Māğūğ, and built a wall for defence against them, he let some of them, who were somewhat less evil than the rest, live on the near side of the wall. Even the name *Turk* or *Atrāk* is derived from this event, according to al-Idrīsī, for Alexander left them to live in peace: "... *fa-sammathum al-ʿarab Turkan li-ʿannahum mimman taraka l-Iskandar min āl Yāğūğ wa-Māğūğ*"⁸.

If we make a careful scrutiny of the reasons given by al-Qazwīnī and other Arabic authors to account for ethnic peculiarities and characteristics, we find that there are two clearly distinguishable sets of explanations. The first of these two may be termed the **genealogical approach/ method**, while the second I am going to call the **climatic approach/ method**. The genealogical approach to ethnic differences and peculiarities is certainly the more ancient, more "classical" method of Arabic

⁵ See Ibn Hawqal, *Šūra* 19; al-Ğāhiz, *Bayān* III, 12-3; al-Masʿūdī, *Murūğ* I, 163, 166-7. This negative image of Africans has proven to be quite long-lived, as even modern Arabic proverbs often display such attitudes; see Zenner 1970: 426; Taymūr 1986: 8 (proverb No. 47).

⁶ On the image of the Turk in Arab eyes, see esp. al-Ğāhiz, *Rasāʿil* I, 59, 70-71; and Haarmann 1988: 176, 178, 184. For modern proverbs on the subject, see ʿAṭāʾllāh 1987: 149, 203.

⁷ *Ātār* 346 (on the influence of the Mars); 6 (on the effect of cold).

⁸ al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat al-muštāq* VII, 850-51. al-Idrīsī all but praises the Turks' character in this passage, quite unlike the way Arab authors usually wrote, but they certainly appear in this light only in comparison with Gog and Magog; for on 851 he states, in concert with the generally held view: "... their character is mostly uncouth, their souls crude, and they rarely obey any victorious power."

thinking, and it is entirely indigenous to their old, nomadic, pre-Islamic culture. Goldziher has shown how important a role genealogical points played in the *hiğā'* poetry of *Ġābiliyya* times⁹, and certainly the genealogical method dominates the ancient genres of *mafāhir* and *maṭālib*. Another phenomenon which shows the significance of genealogical explanations for the Arabs of *Ġābiliyya* is the Arabic "art" of *qiyāfa*, or telling an individual's descent by his outward appearance¹⁰. All this belongs to the folklore of pre-Islamic Arabia, but the reasoning and method of these phenomena were taken over into mediaeval Arabic science. How this genealogical bias of explanation was incorporated into Arabic geographical thinking is well illustrated by the examples I have already cited. In addition to these examples, al-Qazwīnī's book, like other works of its kind, displays a surprisingly copious amount of scattered genealogical explanations for geographical facts and ethnic idiosyncrasies. It is usually implied that the inhabitants of a country or a town are the descendants of their eponymic ancestor, and their characteristics also derive from their respective pedigrees.

So much about the genealogical method of explanation, and now let us have a brief look at the other approach, which I termed the climatic one. This is much more consistently laid out in the *Āṭār al-bilād* and other geographical books of the Middle Ages, since it was a leading and victorious scientific current, not to say fashion, from Abbasid times on. This scientific system, the theory of climes (*aqālīm*) is not an Arab invention. It was borrowed from ancient Greek science, specifically, from the works of Ptolemy (*Baṭlamyūs al-Qalūdī*). It was regarded as "modern science", a really fashionable current of thought in Abbasid times, as is attested by the great number of books devoted to this subject and using this system. Astrology went hand in hand with the theory of climes (*aqālīm*), and ethnic characteristics were quite often accounted for by astrological reasons as well as climatic ones¹¹. The great popularity of the theory of *aqālīm* is well illustrated by a sentence in the *Šūra* of Ibn Hawqal, hardly the most dogmatic-minded of Arabic geographers:

⁹ Consult his *Muslim Studies*. It should be kept in mind that Arabs of the *Ġābiliyya* took for granted the inheritance of moral and physical characteristics alike, hence the importance of *ansāb* in the service of defamation and mockery.

¹⁰ al-Qazwīnī, *ʿAğāʾib* 318. He defines *qiyāfat al-bašar* ("the *qiyāfa* of humans") thus: "... the recognition of a person's genealogy (*ansāb*), judging from the appearance of his limbs. This knowledge is possessed chiefly by a tribe of Bedouins, called Banū Madliğ..."

¹¹ Perhaps the most consistent and useful treatment of the theory of climes is that given us by al-Hamdānī in his *Sifa* I, 28-31, under the heading "An outline of what reached us from Ptolemy on the nature of the Earth's inhabitants" (*mā atā ʿan Baṭlamyūs al-Qalūdī fi ṭabāʾir ahl al-ʿumrān min al-ardʿ alā l-ğumla*).

“I take refuge with God (*a‘ūdū bi-llāh*) from the idea that someone like Ptolemy may mention any mistaken views, or describe anything at variance with what it is really like” (*Ṣūra* 22).

Even in belles-lettres and *adab* works, the concept of *aqālīm* was prevalent. Now I try to summarize, very briefly, the pillars of the climatic theory. Of the seven climes on Earth, the third and fourth are in a central position, therefore only these two are described with the word *i‘tidāl*, moderation and harmoniousness. The very centre of Earth is the region of *Bābil*, that is Iraq, consequently this region is distinguished by an absolute perfection in every sense, including the outward and inward characteristics of its inhabitants. The farther one lives from this centre, the more extreme, disharmonious and anomalous (*munḥarif*) one is likely to be, so that the most imperfect of mankind live in the extreme North and South. al-Qazwīnī’s *Ātār* is firmly based on this theory, as can be seen right from its first pages, the Prefaces to the book. al-Qazwīnī even summarizes this picture of the Earth, saying in the second Preface of the book:

“The inhabitable territories of the Earth are only a small part of it, consisting of the central tracts of the third, the fourth and the fifth *iqlim*. What lies beyond these regions is a veritable penitentiary for its inhabitants; and suffering [from excessive cold or heat, that is] is their everyday experience” (*Ātār* 6).

al-Qazwīnī moreover states that most human characteristics can be explained by the influence of the climate of one’s dwelling-place. He even says that Black Africans may assume a more pleasing appearance and physique (*istaqāmat amziġatuhum*) if they enter moderate lands, by which he means, what else, the Middle East (*Ātār* 14). In another passage, he asserts that Greece (*Yūnān*) is a country that has the beneficial effect of turning its inhabitants into sages, and even visiting foreigners become wiser while staying there (*Ātār* 382). It is obvious from these ideas of the *Ātār* that al-Qazwīnī is a typical exponent of the climatic theory, yet we have already seen how numerous the remnants of the older genealogical reasoning are in his work. This sheds light on an important fact: we are not likely to come across a mediaeval Arabic book on geography and ethnic characters where the two methods, the genealogical and the climatic, are not both present and mixed up. This may be so for several reasons, but I suggest that the following are the most important ones. First, the mixing of the two approaches was facilitated by the fact that both were ideally suited to explain an underlying notion of the superiority of the Muslim peoples of the Middle East. In other words, both approaches are basically ethnocentric theories of a moderate kind. It makes very little difference whether the Iraqis’ perfectness is

attributed to their descent (notably from Sām, son of Noah) or to the location of their habitat; what counts is that they should be shown as the best of mankind¹².

The other, and perhaps more significant, reason for which the genealogical method of explanation was kept alive and mixed into books based on the climatic theory is that the theory of *aqālīm* has its limits; there are cases which it cannot explain. These cases usually appear when it comes to dealing with differences of two ethnic groups that live in identical climatic conditions. The Nabateans and the Berbers are a case in point. While the alleged characters of Turks and Black Africans can be accounted for by climatic reasons (one of these two ethnic groups lives in markedly cold regions, the other in extremely hot ones); Nabateans and Berbers live in the same climes as, say, Arabs or Persians, yet they are described as having quite different attributes. It is therefore not surprising that al-Qazwīnī should only mention a genealogical explanation of their supposed character: their descent from a certain ancestor. In this sense, the genealogical method served as a sort of "last resort" that one could always fall back on, short of a better explanation.¹³

As a final remark, I want to point to the fact that quite a long time had to pass until an author dared to dismiss completely the old and rather worn-out genealogical approach. This author was none other than the brilliant Arab historian, Ibn Ḥaldūn. He went as far as even to criticize on some points the all-too-powerful climatic method, but far more important is that he sought no longer to mix genealogical reasons into the question of ethnic peculiarities. As we have seen, this was far from the attitude of al-Qazwīnī and almost all other mediaeval geographers, who comfortably utilized genealogical reasoning whenever it suited their needs¹⁴.

¹² It is strongly emphasized here that ethnocentrism is, and has always been, a universal cultural phenomenon; and no nation, no group of people, I even venture to say no individual, is totally free from it. Ethnocentrism is an exceptionally easy and comfortable tool for dismissing the problem of others' distinctness, no wonder it is a tool so often used.

An extreme and funny example of an ethnocentric world-view in an Arabic context is furnished by the illustrious al-Ġāḥiz, who quotes a certain Ġa'far b. Sulaymān saying: "Iraq is the centre of Earth; Baṣra is the centre of Iraq; the *Mirbad* is the centre of Baṣra; and my house is the centre of the *Mirbad*." (See *Rasā'il* II, part 4, 139.) The same attitude, though in a less sarcastic form, can be discerned in Yāqūt, *Mu'ğam* I, 53; al-Mas'ūdī, *Tanbih* 34-5, 41; an-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab* I, 347. (The last example reads: "Baghdad is the urban part of the world; the rest is desert/countryside" [*Bagdād ḥāḍirat ad-dunyā wa-mā 'adāhā bādīyā*]).

¹³ It is not to say it was done consciously, like saying: "I can discern no satisfactory explanation in the climatic theory, let's try some genealogy instead." Yet one cannot help but wonder why genealogy-based arguments continued to be used despite the great credit accorded to the climatic theory.

¹⁴ To show what al-Qazwīnī and his contemporaries did not ever accomplish, I quote a passage from Ibn Ḥaldūn's *Muqaddima*: "What caused this error [of mixing genealogical reasoning into geographical science] is the misconception that differences between nations exist only on account of their genealogical pedigrees. This, however, is not true. Differences between races or nations may well be genealogical with some of them, as with Arabs or Hebrews or Persians. Yet the differences may as well

REFERENCES

A. Primary sources

- al-Ġāhiz, *Bayān* = Abū ʿUṭmān ʿAmr b. Baḥr al-Ġāhiz, *al-Bayān wa-t-tabyīn*. 4th ed., 4 vols., ed. by ʿAbdassalām Muḥammad Hārūn. Cairo: Maktabat al-Ḥānḡī, 1975.
- al-Ġāhiz, *Rasāʿil* = Abū ʿUṭmān ʿAmr b. Baḥr al-Ġāhiz, *Rasāʿil*. 2 vols., ed. by ʿAbdassalām Muḥammad Hārūn. Cairo: Maktabat al-Ḥānḡī, n. d.
- al-Hamdānī, *Ṣifa* = Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Yaʿqūb al-Hamadānī, *Ṣifat ḡazīrat al-ʿarab*. 2 vols. Ed. by Heinrich Müller. Leiden 1884.
- Ibn al-Aṭīr, *Kāmil* = ʿIzz ad-Dīn Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī Ibn al-Aṭīr, *al-Kāmil fī t-tārīḫ*. 6 vols. Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Kubrā, 1874.
- Ibn Ḥaldūn, *Muqaddima* = ʿAbdarrahmān Ibn Ḥaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*. 3 vols. Ed. by ʿAlī ʿAbdalwāhid Wafī. Cairo: Dār Nahḍat Miṣr, n. d.
- Ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūra* = Abū l-Qāsim an-Naṣībī Ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūrat al-ard*. Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Hayāt, 1979.
- Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif* = Abū Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh b. Muslim Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-maʿārif*. 4th ed. Ed. by Tarwat ʿUkāša. Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1981.
- Ibn Qutayba, *Uyūn* = Abū Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh b. Muslim Ibn Qutayba, *Uyūn al-ahbār*. 4 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1925.
- al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat al-muštāq* = Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat al-muštāq fī iḥtirāq al-āfāq*. 8 vols., ed. by E. Cerulli. Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1970-78.
- al-Masʿūdī, *Murūḡ* = Abū ʿl-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Masʿūdī, *Murūḡ ad-dahab wa-maʿādin al-ḡawhar*. 9 vols., ed. and tr. by Barbier de Meynard & Pavet de Courteille. Paris 1861-77.
- al-Masʿūdī, *Tanbīh* = Abū ʿl-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Masʿūdī, *at-Tanbīh wa-l-iṣrāf*. Ed. by M. J. de Goeje. Leiden 1894.
- an-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab* = Šihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAbdalwahhāb an-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab*. 2nd ed., 5 vols. Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1929.

be determined by custom, special traits, or even descent too, as among Arabs. Or again, they may be determined by anything else of a nation's ways or distinctive features or distinguishing marks. Consequently, broadly asserting that the inhabitants of any given region, be it in the South or the North, are the descendants of such-and-such a person, because of a common characteristic or colour or feature, shared by that ancestor too, is a gross mistake, resulting from a total ignorance of the nature of things and regions ..." Despite some superficially similar points in their treatment of supposed ethnic characteristics, such a level of scientific consciousness as betrayed by this text of Ibn Ḥaldūn was positively never reached by either al-Qazwīnī or any of his contemporaries and predecessors.

- al-Qazwīnī, *ʿAğāʾib* = Zakariyyā b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Qazwīnī, *ʿAğāʾib al-mablūqāt*. Ed. by F. Wüstenfeld. Göttingen 1848-49.
- al-Qazwīnī, *Ātār* = Zakariyyā b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Qazwīnī, *Ātār al-bilād wa-ahbār al-ʿibād*. Ed. by F. Wüstenfeld. Göttingen 1848-49.
- al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik* = Šihāb ad-Dīn Yaḥyā b. Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-absār fi mamālik al-amṣār*. 24 vols. Ed. by Fuat Sezgin. Frankfurt 1988-89.
- Yāqūt, *Muʿğam* = Šihāb ad-Dīn b. ʿAbdallāh Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿğam al-buldān*. 6 vols. Ed. by F. Wüstenfeld. Leipzig 1924.

B. Secondary sources

- ʿAtāʾllāh, Sāmiya. 1987. *al-Amṭāl aš-šaʿbiyya al-miṣriyya*. 2nd ed. Cairo: Maktabat Madbūlī.
- Goldziher, Ignaz. 1967. *Muslim Studies* (=Muhammedanische Studien), 2 vols. Ed. by S. M. Stern, tr. by C. R. Barber & S. M. Stern. London.
- Haarmann, Ulrich W. 1988. "Ideology and history, identity and alterity: the Arab image of the Turk from the ʿAbbasids to Modern Egypt". *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20. 1988.175-96.
- Taymūr, Aḥmad. 1986. *al-Amṭāl al-ʿāmmiyya*. 4th ed. Cairo: Markaz al-Ahrām.
- Zenner, Walter P. 1970. "Ethnic stereotyping in Arabic Proverbs". *Journal of American Folklore* 83.417-29.