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Egyptian Arabic in the seventeenth century : a study and edition of Yusuf al-Magribi's 'Daf al-isr an kalam ahl Misr'

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CHAPTER 5

Aspects of Daily life

Al-Mağribī describes many aspects of daily life in Egypt at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Amongst the other images he paints for us, the descriptions of food and drinks, clothes, medicinal plants and utensils really help us to form a picture of how Egyptians lived in this period. These aspects will, therefore, be highlighted in this chapter.

5.1 Food and drinks

5.1.1 Sweetmeats

It seems that Egyptian dietary habits have not changed much over the years. Like today, the Egyptians in al-Mağribī's time seem to have had a sweet tooth. Al-Mağribī mentions a number of sweets, some of which are still well-known, such as the all-time favourites كنافة *kunāfa* "pastry made of thin vermicelli-shaped dough" (32b, 33b), كحك العيد *kaḥk al-īd* "cookies served at the religious holidays" (62a), قَطَائِف *qaṭā'if* "sweet pancakes" (32b), نَقْل *nuql* "a dessert of dried fruit or nuts" (93a), مَفْتَقَه *mafattaqa* (52a) "jam made of molasses and other ingredients", مَرَابَبَا *mārabā* (9a) "jam" and عَسَل نَحْل *asal naḥl* "honey" (83b). We also find reference to some sweetmeats that are less familiar these days: مَامُونِيَا *māmūniya* (109a), a kind of marzipan, apparently named after al-Ma'mūn;²⁵³ a sweetmeat which al-Mağribī calls alternately خَشْكَنَان *ḥuškanān* (10a) and خَشْتَنَانَك *ḥuštānānak* (58a), which is a pastry filled with almond paste (عَجْوَة *ağwa* (128b)), a popular dish in the seventeenth century²⁵⁴ which was still known at the time of Aḥmad Taymūr Bāšā²⁵⁵ but is now, apparently, forgotten; هَيْطَلِيَا *hyṭaliyya*, a sweet dish made of wheat

²⁵³ "I heard that it is a *nisba* to al-Ma'mūn, because he introduced it" (109a). Lane I 103a confirms this: "مَامُونِيَا a certain kind of food; so called in relation to el-Ma-moon". Al-Ma'mūn, Abū al-Abbās 'Abd Allāh b. Hārūn al-Rašīd (170/786- 218/833) was the seventh 'Abbāsīd caliph, see *Et*² VI 331a ff.

²⁵⁴ See Davies (1981) p. 367. It was already popular in the fifteenth century, as attested by Vrolijk (1998) p. 30.

²⁵⁵ See Taymūr (2001-2) III p. 183.

starch and milk (94a)²⁵⁶ and رخاميّة *ruḥāmiyya* “marble sweet” (97b), so called because its colour resembles that of marble. *ruḥāmiyya* is not found in dictionaries of modern Egyptian Arabic, but recipes are available on the internet. It consists of crumbled cookies covered with white cream. The “marble effect” is created by drawing dark lines on the cream with chocolate.

Nuts were eaten as well: Al-Mağribī mentions فستق *fustuq* “pistachios” (53a), nowadays called *fuzdu*’ in Egypt,²⁵⁷ بندق *bunduq* “hazelnuts” (38a), which were called فندق *funduq* (53b) by the Turks, and chestnuts, which were called قسطل / قسطل *qasṭal* / *qasṭal* (89a) or ابو فريوة *abū farywa* “the one with the little fur” (89a), nowadays known as *abu farwa*.

5.1.2 Savory dishes

ادام *idām* “gravy” (95a) was eaten with bread, like today, and was perhaps wiped up with a قشفة *qišfa* “bread crust” (32b). There were different types of bread:²⁵⁸ شريك *širyk* (60b) and صامول *šāmūl* (81a) (both unspecified by al-Mağribī; *šurēk* is today used for a type of bun, and comes from the Turkish *çörek*,²⁵⁹ while *šāmūli* was used for “coarse bread, soldiers’ bread” in the nineteenth century²⁶⁰), كُماج *kumāğā* “dry bread” (10a) (from Persian كوماج) and جراية *ğirāya* (124b) (also not specified by al-Mağribī; nowadays the word is used for “bread ration, coarse bread”,²⁶¹ which is the name of the bread eaten in the Egyptian army these days, which is a kind of old, dried *ēš baladī*). People ate فول *fūl* “broad beans” (88a; 110a) and rice,²⁶² and the latter could be seasoned with pepper and was then called مغلغل *mufalfil* (88a). Lane describes this as follows:

²⁵⁶ Davies (1981) p. 486: “HYṬLY:H – ‘a dish made of wheat starch and milk; it is extremely delicious to eat and lighter than rice pudding, especially if honey is added to it’”.

²⁵⁷ This is probably in analogy to *bundu*’, which has the same ending -u’.

²⁵⁸ Al-Mağribī calls bread *hubz*, not *ēš*, in the context of the entries, but this is a classicism. The part of the book in which *ēš* was mentioned as an entry, is lost, but in *al-Qawl al-muqtadab* p. 73 we find that the word عيش was indeed included in *Daf al-iṣr*, so we know for certain that the Egyptians called their bread *ēš*.

²⁵⁹ See Hinds-Badawi (1986) p. 463b.

²⁶⁰ See Spiro (1999) p. 331b.

²⁶¹ See Hinds-Badawi (1986) p. 157b-158a.

²⁶² This is written as ارز *aruzz* on fol. 88a, but as رز *ruzz* on fol. 10a.

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“A dish of boiled rice (called “ruzz mufelfel”, the “pilāv” of the Turks), mixed with a little butter, and seasoned with salt and pepper.”²⁶³

Al-Mağribī also mentions a rice dish, فلاو خشكه *ḥaška fālāw* “dry rice” (10a) (from the Persian خشكه *hushka*, “boiled rice without butter”²⁶⁴ and پلاو *palāv*, “a rice dish”²⁶⁵) which he ate in the homes of his Persian friends.

Food without salt was known as مكفن *mukaffan* (117b). Part of the basic diet were بصل *baṣal* “onions” (65b), توم *twm* “garlic” (96a) and سلجم *salġam* “turnips” (101a). The clarified butter, nowadays called *samna*, which is used in large quantities in Egyptian kitchens, was called سلا *silā* (9a) in al-Mağribī’s time.²⁶⁶ Bouillon مرق *maraq* (55a) was used just as it is today. A type of cheese, حالوم *ḥālūm* (96b),²⁶⁷ which is still available today, was also eaten.

Thin sheets of dough, called رقاق *ruqāq* (40b), were used in various dishes and are still eaten. Small savory pastries, such as بريك *baryk* (56b), and the still popular triangular سنبوسك *sanbūsak* (60b), which is now filled with cheese, minced meat or spinach, are both mentioned in *Daf al-iṣr*, as are كمشك *kišk* (62a), a dish which is still popular and is prepared with wheat and milk,²⁶⁸ and نقانق *naqāniq* “small sausages” (56a). The latter dish is still known in Syria,²⁶⁹ but in Egypt is now called *sugu*, from the Turkish *sucuk*.²⁷⁰ A dish which is no longer familiar in Egypt is ارنبية *arnabiyya* “hare ragout”²⁷¹ (11a).

²⁶³ Lane (2003) p. 146.

²⁶⁴ See Steingass (1975) p. 463.

²⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 254.

²⁶⁶ We still find *masli* “clarified butter” in Egypt nowadays, although Hinds-Badawi (1986) p. 428b mentions that it is not pure dialect.

²⁶⁷ From Coptic, see Crum (1972) p. 670a.

²⁶⁸ Its popularity is attested to by its use in the following proverbs: فلان اكل كمشك عند فلان “so-and-so ate *kišk* at so-and-so’s house”, which meant “he ate a lot of food till his belly swelled up”, see Davies (1981) p. 458; and *huwwa farḥa b-kišk* “he is the favourite”, see HB 753a.

²⁶⁹ Barthélemy (1935) p. 847.

²⁷⁰ See Hinds-Badawi (1986) 400a.

²⁷¹ See Dozy (1927) I p. 19a.

5.1.3 Drinks

Red wine was called جريال *ǧiryāl* (67b) due to its colour, because the word literally means “golden red”.²⁷²

A sweet drink called سوييا *sūbyā* (9a), which is still popular today, is mentioned by al-Maǧribī. It was originally a Turkish word: Redhouse (1992) p. 1086b “سوييه *sūbiye*, a sweet drink prepared from pounded almonds, melon or cucumber seeds, etc.”. In Egypt these days, however, it is prepared in a different way, with fermented rice and sugar.

From coffee beans, or بن *bunn* (110a), قهوة *qahwa* “coffee” was made. Coffee was first introduced to Cairo by *ṣūfīs* in the Yemeni quarters of al-Azhar, sometime in the first decade of the tenth century AH / sixteenth century AD.²⁷³ According to al-Maǧribī, coffee sellers used to say جيا *ǧabā* “for free!” when pouring out the drink.²⁷⁴ He also explicitly mentions that an excellent type of coffee drunk in Egypt is made of قشر *qišr*, i.e. the husks, of the bean. This use of the husks is also mentioned in Hattox’s study about coffee in the Middle East:

“Some descriptions refer almost exclusively to using the husks. The description initially given Khā’ir Beg of coffee, that it is “cooked from the husks of the seed called *bunn* that comes from the Yemen,” is one example.”²⁷⁵

Nowadays in Yemen, coffee is still made from the husks, see Behnstedt (2006) p. 996: “*ǧišrin*: Kaffeeschalen, ein Getränk, gebraut aus Kaffeeschalen, Ingwer und Zimt”.

Al-Maǧribī quotes from a poem created by one of his teachers, ‘Alī al-Maǧdisī, in praise of coffee, and there is another about the same topic which al-Maǧribī produced.²⁷⁶ He even mentions that when the value of the letters of the word *qahwa* is added up, it has the same numerical value as the word *qawī*.²⁷⁷ To him, this

²⁷² See Hava (2001) p. 86b and al-Ḥafāǧī (1865) p. 67-68.

²⁷³ See Hattox (1991) pp. 27-8.

²⁷⁴ See fols. 5b and 124b; al-Maǧribī by mistake mentions the entry *ǧabā* twice, first in the chapter *alif* and later in the chapter *wāw/yā’*. He actually has another explanation of the word, see the entry جيا in the Glossary.

²⁷⁵ Hattox (1991) p. 84.

²⁷⁶ Both on fol. 5b.

²⁷⁷ Every letter of the alphabet has a certain numerical value. Q = 100, H = 5, W = 6, Y = 10, see *E² III* p. 595 (T. Fahd).

قهوه QHWH: 100+5+6+5=116.

قوي QWY: 100+6+10=116.

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is proof of its positive qualities.²⁷⁸ It was the cause of some hilarity when, during a *maġlis*,²⁷⁹ a Turk who had apparently not mastered the Arabic language pointed out that when the word قهوة is inverted it reads هو حق “it is the truth”.²⁸⁰ As well as this passage on fols. 5b-6a, the word قهوة appears five more times in the context of entries in *Daf al-iṣr*,²⁸¹ and is mentioned in seven poems in total.²⁸² It is, therefore, clear that the drink had become important in Egyptian society since the time of its first appearance there.

5.2 Drugs and tobacco

Al-Maġribī mentions the use of drugs on a few occasions. The people of Egypt said, for instance: الكيف من الكيف *yākul min al-kyf* “he eats of the hashish”.²⁸³ The word *kyf* is a metonymy: it was first used to describe the state of pleasure caused by hashish, and therefore later also came to mean the drug itself.²⁸⁴ We can conclude from *yākul* that the hashish was eaten, not smoked, as still happens today. Sometimes people mixed it قتل الحشيش *qatal al-ḥašīš*.²⁸⁵ Although al-Maġribī does not mention with what, it could perhaps have been the innovation called tobacco (see below). Al-Maġribī mentions the word افيون *afyūn* “opium” (117a) as well, although he tells us no more than يقولون افيون *yaqūlūn afyūn*, using a quotation from *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīt*.²⁸⁶ He also comments that somebody can be مسطول *masṭūl* “high or stoned, intoxicated” or can be سطة في *fī saṭla* (same meaning).²⁸⁷ It is unclear, however,

²⁷⁸ See fol. 6a.

²⁷⁹ A social gathering. For more information about this cultural phenomenon, see §1.3.

²⁸⁰ Fol. 6a. See also §4.3.

²⁸¹ يقولون عند اتيان القهوة (110a), “they say *bunn* to the origin of coffee” يقولون بن لاصل القهوة “they say, when the coffee is being served, *ḡabā*” (124b), “they say: hot coffee” (115a), يقولون فنجان قهوة “they say: a coffee cup” (117a), من البن, يقولون قهوة المستخرج من البن “they call the extract of coffee beans *qahwa*” (130b).

²⁸² On fols. 5b (twice), 6a, 11b, 76a, 99b, and 130b.

²⁸³ Fol. 33b.

²⁸⁴ See Dozy (1927) II p. 505b “... Proprement l'état de gaïté, d'ivresse, causé par le hachich, et ensuite le hachich meme”.

²⁸⁵ Fol. 89a.

²⁸⁶ Prosper Alpin mentions in his *Médecine* (1980) I p. 255 that the Egyptians used opium very frequently. Alpin stayed in Egypt from 1581 to 1584.

²⁸⁷ Fol. 80b.

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whether he means that such a person was drunk or high. He explicitly mentions that these two words are used frequently by the people from the Ḥiḡāz.

Tobacco was a completely new phenomenon in al-Maḡribī's time. He explicitly mentions that in the year he wrote *Daf al-iṣr*, i.e. 1014/1606, a new phenomenon called طابغه *ṭābġa* had come into fashion.²⁸⁸ This is correct, since we know that tobacco was introduced to Egypt in 1603-1604,²⁸⁹ and it would be reasonable to assume that it would take some time to become popular with the general public. What al-Maḡribī tells us about it is extremely interesting. Shops which specialized in tobacco were established, and there were even suggestions that other special places should open for it, like coffee houses. He mentions in the margin that one رطل *raṭl* (around 443 gram²⁹⁰) is sold for three gold coins (ثلاثة ذهب) *ṭalāṭa ḍahab*). This must be the gold coin called *ašrafī* (or *šarīfī*) *muḥammadī*, since this was the only one in use in Cairo in the Ottoman period until the end of the 17th century.²⁹¹ Its weight was 3,448 gram.²⁹² Therefore, 1 *raṭl* of tobacco was worth 10,344 grams of gold. The only thing al-Maḡribī can tell us about the origin of tobacco is that it came from the West. He tried it once and did not like it at all because it made him feel dizzy. He further mentions that people smoke it, and for this activity they use the phrase يشربون دخانها *yašrabūn duḡḡānahā* "they drink its smoke".²⁹³ Moreover, he tells us that there was some question about whether it was permissible to smoke while fasting during Ramaḏān. According to a certain *šayḥ* called al-Zayyādī²⁹⁴ it was actually allowed, which al-Maḡribī believed to be reprehensible.²⁹⁵

²⁸⁸ Fol. 16b. Tobacco was first introduced in Europe by Columbus in 1493, although at that time it stirred mostly botanical interest, see *El² X 753a* (R. Matthee). At the end of the 1580s, smoking was made popular by Sir Walter Raleigh, who introduced it at the English court. See Milton (2000) p. 182ff.

²⁸⁹ See *El² X p. 753b* (R. Matthee).

²⁹⁰ Note that the weights varied throughout the Ottoman period, and also depended on the place and the commodity; this is therefore an estimation, see Raymond (1973) I p. lvii. The *raṭl* remained commonly in use in Egypt until around the 70s of the last century, along with the *wi'yya* "ounce", in parallel with the metric system.

²⁹¹ See Raymond (1973) I p. 28.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Also in Turkish, the word for "to drink", *içmek*, is used for "to smoke".

²⁹⁴ This is probably 'Alī b. Yaḡyā Nūr al-Dīn al-Zayyādī al-Miṣrī al-Šāfi'ī, d. 1024/1615. He was originally from Maḡallat Zayyād in al-Buḡayra, but lived and died in Cairo. He was a famous *faqīh* and *mufī*. See Zirikli (1955) V p. 32 and al-Muḡbbī (online version): <http://islampost.com/d/1/trj/1/144/3525.html>.

²⁹⁵ See fol. 75b.

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It is natural that such an innovation caused some controversy, even though it nowadays seems incredible that some might have considered smoking during Ramaḍān to be acceptable.²⁹⁶ During the Ottoman rule smoking became common place, as was proven by archaeological finds. Ward and Baram (1999) p. 145 state that “archaeologists have noted that clay pipes are among the most plentiful artifacts studies from the era that the Ottoman Empire ruled over the Middle East.”

5.3 Medicine

In *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*, many herbs and vegetables are praised for their medicinal properties. These descriptions were copied by al-Mağribī, showing that the belief in the healing power of these plants had not diminished since *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ* was written in the fourteenth century. For instance, باقلا *bāqillā* “broad beans” were believed to relieve coughing (66a), while فجل *fiġl* “radishes” are almost a magical medicine, curing such various afflictions as وجع المفاصل واليرقان ولوجع الكبد “pain in the joints, jaundice, dropsy, and bites of snakes and scorpions” (86b).

Some of the complaints from which 17th century Egyptians suffered were: شقاق *šaqāq* “a disease which causes cracks in the skin” (47a),²⁹⁷ شقيقة *šaqyqa* “a splitting headache” (47a), فتق *fatq* “hernia, rupture” (51b), قشفت *qāšaf* “chapped skin” (32b),²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ The dilemma of Muslim scholars on this point is described in *Et*² X 754a (R. Matthee): “As in many places around the world, tobacco in the early stage of its introduction in the Middle East aroused suspicion on the part of clerics and bureaucrats alike. Muslim scholars, unable to find references to tobacco in the Qur’ān, resorted to analogical reasoning to determine whether smoking was permitted or should be condemned and banned as contrary to religion. As tobacco did not resemble any of the forbidden substances mentioned in the Qur’ān, proscribing it was not a simple matter. Nor was it easy to “prove” that tobacco in itself was bad, or harmful to one’s health. (...) Arguments for and against tobacco were often made in the context of the controversy between the representatives of orthodoxy, who rejected tobacco, and members of Šūfī orders, who took to smoking”. Apparently al-Mağribī was an exception to the rule that šūfīs took to smoking. Kātib Čelebi describes the way smoking was received in Istanbul and discusses whether it is permitted under Islamic law, see Ḥalīfa (1957) pp. 50-59. Rosenthal (1971) p. 129 recounts an interesting anecdote narrated by Ibn al-Wakīl al-Mīlawī (see §2.1) about two men smoking in a park who are caught red-handed.

²⁹⁷ Still used nowadays in expressions like *ka’bi mša’ā* “the skin of my heel is cracked”.

²⁹⁸ Both *fat’* and *’ašaf* are still used in Egypt with the same meaning.

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or *fahāqa* “death rattle” (51a), a condition which once afflicted al-Mağribī.²⁹⁹ Anyone who became ill was normally dependent on the services of the *mizayyin* or barber,³⁰⁰ who could stitch up (*qṭab*) a wound (20a), prescribe a *marham* “ointment” (106a) or *lu‘ūq* “electuary” (54b).³⁰¹ William Lane did not have a high opinion of them, finding that the Egyptian barbers were “miserably ignorant of the sciences which they profess, and unskilful in their practice”.³⁰²

An antidote called *tiryāq fārūq* “distinguishing theriac” (52a) was used for snakebites. The Ottoman traveller Evliya Čelebi (1611-after 1683) gives us a detailed description of how it was manufactured in Egypt. In the month of July, specialist hunters used to catch a great number of snakes, which were then transported to the hospital of Qalāwūn, slaughtered, hung out to dry, and then used to prepare this special medicine.³⁰³

5.4 Games

Al-Mağribī mentions some terminology connected with the game of chess. The word *firzān* (117a) is normally used for “queen” in chess, and is derived from the Persian *farzīn* “wise man, counsellor”.³⁰⁴ *dast* (3a), another Persian word, means “game”.³⁰⁵ Less common are three other chess-terms used by al-Mağribī. When somebody loses a game, he says *marmād*, meaning literally “affected by ophthalmia”, as if the loser wants to say *ma rāyt fī hādā al-dast* “I did not see in this game”.³⁰⁶ Although at first sight it would be tempting to compare this to the “blind mate”, this would be inaccurate because the latter is “a mate which the winner does not see is mate”,³⁰⁷ while al-Mağribī

²⁹⁹ See §1.2.

³⁰⁰ Lane (2003) p. 218: “The Egyptian medical and surgical practitioners are mostly barbers”. This remained the case until recently, but barbers or *mizayyinīn* have gradually lost their popularity after doctors reached almost every corner of Egypt. For instance, circumcision was always an exercise practiced by the *mizayyin*.

³⁰¹ These last three words are still in use in Egypt nowadays.

³⁰² Lane (2003) p. 218.

³⁰³ see Prokosch (2000) p. 172ff.

³⁰⁴ See Murray (1962) p. 159 and Wieber (1972) p. 186.

³⁰⁵ See Wieber (1972) p. 291.

³⁰⁶ *Daf al-iṣr* fol. 3a.

³⁰⁷ Murray (1962) p. 832.

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mentions that in the case of *mərmād*, it is the loser who did not see. This term is not found in this specific context in any dictionary, but it is mentioned with exactly the same meaning and explained in Ibn Taġrī Birdī's *al-Nuġūm al-zāhira fī 'ulūm Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*:

ووقع بينه وبين قاضي القضاة عز الدين عبد العزيز بن العز البغدادي الحنبلي مفاوضة في بعض مجالس السلطان لمعنى من المعاني، فكان من جملة كلام ابن السفاح هذا، أن قال: ربيع الوقف - وشدّد الباء - فقال عز الدين المذكور: اسكت يا مرمد، فضحك السلطان ومن حضر، وانتصف عليه الحنبلي. فلما نزلا من القلعة، سألت من عز الدين عن قوله مرمد، فقال: الأثر ككثيراً ما يلعبون الشطرنج، وقد صار بينهم أن الذي لا يعرف شيء يسمى مرمد، فقصدت الكلام بما اعتادوه وعرفتهم أنه لا يعرف شيء، وأنه جاهل بما يقول، وتم لي ما قصدته.³⁰⁸

“Between him³⁰⁹ and the ‘judge of judges’ ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. al-‘Izz al-Baġdādī al-Ḥanbalī, was a discussion in one of the Sultan’s *maġālis* about the meaning of a certain word. One of the things Ibn al-Saffāḥ said was the following: ‘*rayyī’ al-waqf* (‘the income resulting from a dedicated land for a purpose’), with a *šadda* on the *yā*. So, the aforementioned ‘Izz al-Dīn said: ‘Shut up you *mərmād*’, leading to laughter from the Sultan and the other attendants, and al-Ḥanbalī demanded justice (?).³¹⁰ So when they went down from the citadel, I asked ‘Izz al-Dīn about the meaning of the word *mərmād*, and he said: ‘The Turks play chess often, and when it happens that there is somebody among them who is ignorant, they call him *mərmād*, so I meant this word in the way they are using it in, and let them know that he doesn’t know a thing and that he is ignorant about what he said, and that is what I meant.”

So, although the term was unfamiliar to an Arabic speaker, it was well-known by the Turkish speaking courtiers. More mysterious is the term *mərmād quffa* (32b). The meaning of the word *yidaydib* (13a) is also not entirely clear, although it seems to be related to the noun *dadabān / didabān* “sentry” (see Hinds-

³⁰⁸ Ibn Taġrī Birdī (1963) XV pp. 174-175.

³⁰⁹ I.e., the judge Šihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Šalāḥ al-Dīn Šālīḥ b. Aḥmad b. ‘Umar, known as Ibn al-Saffāḥ al-Ḥanbalī al-Šāfi‘ī, whose demise Ibn al-Taġrī Birdī had just mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

³¹⁰ The meaning of انتصف here is unclear. Dozy II p. 680a “انتصف demander justice d’un tel (من) pour (ل) une personne; من فلان في كلامه parler de quelqu’un comme de son égal, ne pas lui donner de titre”.

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Badawi (1986) p. 282b), whose origin is the Persian *dīdabān* (see Steingass p. 552a). Neither of these words is mentioned by Wieber and Murray, two authorities on chess.

Another game described by al-Mağribī, although not in such detail, is the *طاب* *ṭāb* (16b). It is still played today with four pieces of palm branch which are white on one side and green on the other, a board, and a few stones. It is described in detail in Lane's *Manners and customs* (2003) pp. 346-349.

5.5 Clothing and jewellery

Al-Mağribī pays a great deal of attention to the different types of clothing worn by the Egyptians. In total, he mentions 27 types of garments or words related to clothing, from the *ʿamāma* “turban” (103a) to the *tarḡīl* “slipper” (75), and from the *tabbān* “short under-pants” (110a) to the *buḥnuq* “veil” (36b). People used to wear a *شروال* *širwāl* “drawers” (80b), also called *سروال* (80a), which was kept up with a waistband, called *دكة* *dikka* (57a) or *نيافق* *nayāfiq* (56a). They wore a *زبون* *zabūn* “inner vest”, a *قرطق* (53b) *qarṭaq* “tunic” or *قبا* (130a) *qabā* “sleeved robe”, and when it was cold, a woollen cloak which was called *عبا* *ʿabā* (9a) or *عباية* *ʿabāya* (128b).

Two types of garment are particularly worth mentioning here because they are generally not well-documented. The first one is the *حنيني* *ḥanynī* (112b), which is described in Dozy I 330b as “semble être le nom d’un vêtement”, occurring once in 1001 Nights. Al-Mağribī does not take us closer to an understanding of what kind of garment this might be, since he only mentions that it is *شي يلبس* *šy yulbas* “a thing that is worn”. Unfortunately, it is the same with the second item, the *كامليية* *kāmiliyya* (91b): *ياقولون كامليية لما يلبس لم تعلم* *yaqūlūn kāmiliyya limā yulbas lam tuʿlam* “they say *kāmiliyya* to something that is worn, and it is not known [in Classical Arabic]”. This word, like *ḥanynī*, is not found in any other source apart from Dozy II 489b, who does not specify it: “espèce de robe” (his source is Ibn Iyās).

To these items of clothing we can add some words for jewellery, all of which are well known today: *خزام* *ḥazām* “nose ring” (97a), *خلخال* *ḥulḥāl* “anklet” (72a), *دبله* *dibla* “ring” (72b), *طوق* *ṭwq* “neckband” (47b), *غوش* *ḡūš* “glass bracelets” (101a) (nowadays the diminutive *ḡiwēša* is used) and *مشنينة* *libba mašanšina* “a jingling necklace” (115b).

5.6 Kitchen utensils, tools, and other household items

There are 33 entries about the utensils used in daily life in *Daf al-iṣr*. Many of these are kitchen items, such as the عكة *ʾakka* “receptacle for clarified butter” (61a), صلاية *ṣalāya* “mortar and pestle” (128b), مغرفة *maġrafa* “ladle” (31b), لُحُوقِي *luḥūqī* “small cooking pot” (54a), ابريق *abrīq* “ewer with a spout” (36b), ماعون *māʿūn* “kitchen pot” (119a), and هَوْن *hwn* “mortar” (120a). We also find reference to different types of jugs: باطية *bāṭiya* “jug” (123b), بكلة (66a) *bakla* “vessel for water for washing one’s backside”,³¹¹ قلة *qulla* “earthenware water jar” (89b), and also the pad put under the jug when carried on the head: حَوَايه *ḥawwāya* (125b). The mention of other items gives us some idea about the things found in the average household at that time: دواية *dawāya* “inkwell” (127a), لَيْقَة *līqa* “bit of wool which is inserted in an inkwell” (55a), مردن *mardan* “spindle” (114a), مَرْجُونَة *marġūna* “basket” (114a), مَسَلَّة *misalla* “thick needle” (91b), مِسَن *misann* “whetstone” (115b), مصقلة *maṣqala* “burnisher” (81a), عِلْبَة *ʿilba* “small container” (17a), حق *ḥuqq* “small box” (38b), قَرْوَة *qarwa* “basket of palm leaves” (130a), قَفَّة *qaffa* “basket made of palm stalks” (32b), قَنْدِيل *qandīl* “oil lamp” (90b), قَنْبِيَّة *qanīniyya* “glass drinking-bowl” (117b), and مَكْحَلَة *mukḥila* “kohl-holder” (90b).³¹² The most important thing to note about these items is that they show that Yūsuf al-Maġribī, an Azharite scholar and *ṣūfī*, did not believe it was beneath him to show an interest in such everyday things, which were mostly the domain of women. Indeed, that al-Maġribī was interested in the world of women and children becomes apparent from the presence in *Daf al-iṣr* of several expressions used exclusively by them. For these, the reader is referred to §6.5.1.1.

³¹¹ For this translation of the word *istinġāʿ* see Hinds-Badawi (1986) 851a and Hava (2001) 753b.

³¹² Al-Maġribī also mentions that in the Maġrib, مَكْحَلَة means “rifle”, because of the similarity between the kohl and gun powder. It is still used with this meaning in Morocco, see Harrell-Sobelman (2004) p. 81a.