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| Al-Naqqāsh, Mārūn مارون النقاش(1817-1855) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Mārūn Al-Naqqāsh is often seen as the father of modern Arabic drama. He was born in Sidon, but grew up in Beirut. After a traditional education comprising detailed studies of Arabic language and literature as well as law and foreign languages Al-Naqqāsh decided to travel. His first journeys took him to Damascus and Aleppo, and then in 1846 he travelled to Egypt and Italy. In Italy he became fascinated with European theatre and on his return to Beirut he decided to write and produce a play. Drawing on his deep knowledge of Arabic culture in addition to influences from his journeys, Al-Naqqāsh produced *al-bakhīl* (The Miser)(1847). The five-act play was inspired by Molière’s *L’Avare* but included features from puppet and shadow theater, two popular genres in Beirut at the time. Before obtaining permission to build a theatre, Al-Naqqāsh used the courtyard of his own home as a stage and engaged friends and family to take part in his plays. His brother Niqūla Al- Naqqāsh also contributed plays for the theatre. |
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| Further reading:  (Allen)  (Carlson)  (Dorrigo) |