

Pharaonic Linguistic and Cultural Survivals in Egyptian Colloquial Arabic

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Despite the fact that Egypt underwent massive historical and political changes and experienced different cultures (Pharaonic, Coptic, Greek, Roman, etc.) and religions (principally, native Egyptian religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), Pharaonic patterns of cultural practices and linguistic features made their way into the culture and lifestyle of modern Egypt. These historical and political changes reflect the internal evolution of the language but also the impact of the socio-political environment on the language and its writing. The local culture of Egypt remains the same and this similarity manifests itself best through the language such as expressions and metaphors, which are inspired by the natural environment of the Nile Valley.

As a native Arabic speaker, and as an Egyptologist, I have observed throughout my study of Egyptology, signs of commonality between ancient Egypt and modern Egypt in different aspects. These aspects reflect a chain of cultural continuity that is represented in practices, traditions and linguistic features that appear to have survived from the ancient Egyptian language to Arabic. Experimental archaeology and ethnography have successfully been used to trace cultural continuity, but rarely have been used by Egyptologists, and rarely has been performed with a linguistic focus. In this paper, I will discuss some of the features of cultural continuity that is observed in the daily life in Egypt including, language, traditions, and cultural practices.