

apparatus is not so, merely spelling out phrases that have been corrected without naming the editor responsible for the correction. Inevitably some cruxes are passed over, but I was disappointed to see no reference to the emendations of that pillar of SOAS, Jareer Abu-Haidar, *Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provencal Lyrics* (London: Curzon Press, 2001, ch. 3).

When we turn to the translation, we find what Monroe really has to offer. It seems to me remarkably well-judged, and it is the first translation to retain something of the feel of Ibn Quzmān's ways of expression. Even when one thinks that Monroe may not have dealt with a crux, or made an error, a second look makes one realize that the flavour of the original is being projected.

The essays in volume 2 are the work of a thoughtful literary critic, able to draw on wide reading. Monroe is thus able to edify his readers and make them think hard on a wide range of topics in a cornucopia that recalls the sprightliness of Jāhiz. There are some errors, often due to his sources. Monroe is interested in the Latin *natura* as a precursor of the Arabic *ṭabī'a*. However, the comment (p. 1312) that "This is a neuter-plural word from the verb *nascor*" is misleading philological pre-history. In surviving Latin it is a feminine singular noun, as can be seen in the title of Lucretius' epic *De rerum natura*. However, such minor blemishes should not distract us from the value of the insights into Ibn Quzmān's unique poetry.

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MICHAEL ALLAN:

*In the Shadow of World Literature: Sites of Reading in Colonial Egypt.* (Translation/Transnation.) xi, 180 pp. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. ISBN 978 0 691 16782 4.  
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This book raises fundamental questions which are relevant to all who read, write, publish or teach those texts which are accepted more often than defined as literature, the literature which consists of the books which are seen as essential components of the culture of modern educated individuals. These are also the texts which feature on the curricula in schools and in the departments of literature in our institutions of higher education. But as we read, write, publish or pursue teaching and research in literature, these questions are frequently more subliminal than in the forefront of our minds. In short, the author's primary concern is with "the practices, norms, and sensibilities integral to recognizing certain texts as literature and certain practices of response as reading" (p. 18). In other words, the subject is the processes by which certain texts are consecrated as literary objects, thus constituting the canons of literature, both within national territories and languages and extending into the wider transnational spaces of world literature. These are not new problems but they are worth revisiting on a regular basis. The context in which the author pursues his quest he describes as Colonial Egypt, although some of the significant authors treated here (Taha Husayn + 1973, Najib Mahfuz + 2006) would not have considered themselves to be living and writing in a colony in the strict sense of the term.

One of Allan's central concerns is to suggest a more nuanced approach to the cultural tensions which affect most societies, and not least the Egyptian. He does this in contexts which range from the controversy known as the Lewis Affair, sparked by discussions of the work of Charles Darwin in the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut

in 1872 (pp. 94 ff.), the family conflicts surrounding Darwin again as a result of the article written by Kamal, the protagonist in Najib Mahfuz's novel *Qasr al-shawq* (pp. 102 ff.), and the violent reactions in 2000 which followed the reprinting in Cairo of the novel *Walima li-a'shab al-bahr* by the Syrian Haydar Haydar (pp. 20 ff.). The author rejects the binary oppositions which characterize such controversies and which are based on two worldviews: the modern, secular and literate versus the traditional, the religious and the illiterate. Needless to say it is the former which establishes the parameters for literary canons, from which the latter are largely excluded and against which on occasion they protest in violent circumstances. Here the author is driven by the undeniable circumstances of a world in which secularism is increasingly challenged by religion. In this context, his use of the terms "illiterate" and "fanatical" is thought-provoking: while proponents of the "modern, secular, rational" approach frequently stigmatize their opponents as illiterate and fanatical, the author is well aware they are placed beyond the pale of the norms of literacy and rationalism by those who stigmatize them as such. Thus illiteracy becomes more a matter of taste and opinion than actual reading capacity.

It is worth noting at this point that controversial texts have lives which transcend the practices of reading and textual criticism: in the cases of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* or *The Satanic Verses*, many "virtual readers" were for or against without having read the texts, such is the power of what is perceived to be literate and civilized.

In his mission to go beyond the binary oppositions of literate-illiterate, secular-religious, the author is highly convincing in his discussion of the chapter in *Qasr al-shawq* where Kamal's family discusses his article on Darwin (pp. 102 ff.). The author, correctly, dismisses the view that the chapter illustrates the triumph of science over religion, and suggests that the novel "constructs religion as a category negotiated between characters" (p. 111) and exposes how the characters recognize their respective positions. Whatever the nature of Mahfuz's individual religious belief, the majority of his novels indicate a fundamental identification with the liberal, broad-minded Islamic culture that was his own.

In his account of the forces which secure the category of literature, the author presents an informative chapter on education, both colonial and non-colonial, while that on translation traces the evolution of the Rosetta Stone from object to text and from national to transnational. His keen reader's eye on occasion produces unexpected conclusions, such as his suggestion that when it comes to the consideration of literature in specific and different contexts, there is more in common between the arch-Orientalist H.A.R. Gibb and the arch-Postcolonialist Edward Said than is commonly assumed (pp. 87-91). The book is solidly grounded in history, anthropology on occasion, and the relevant theories which underpin comparative or world literature. Its overriding priority are those semiotic ideologies which establish what is "literature" and whom should be considered "literate". Most soberingly, the chapter on intellectuals (pp. 115 ff.) suggests that the very parameters of what is perceived as literature have a narrowing rather than a broadening effect, in spite of the spread of such literature beyond national boundaries. If writers within these parameters aspire to cosmopolitanism, as many do, is this not in itself a form of provincialism (p. 115)?

The reviewer's one concern is that the range of literary examples analysed in detail is limited: Jurji Zaydan, Taha Husayn and Najib Mahfuz are major figures, but it might have sharpened the author's case had something been said about important writers who seem not to have quite made it into the magic circle of the internationally recognized canon. For example, the poet Mahmud Bayram al-Tunisi (1893-1961) was one of the greatest writers in Egypt during the period under discussion. True he wrote in the vernacular, but his work is replete with the universal

values of wonderful humour and satire, and his appeal spanned a quite extraordinary range of class and culture in Egypt. That said, this is an important book. Its most salutary lesson is that none of us is innocent in those processes of inclusion and exclusion which constitute the canons of literature.

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VIRGINIE PREVOST:

*Les mosquées ibadites du Djebel Nafūsa. Architecture, histoire et religions du nord-ouest de la Libye (viii<sup>e</sup>–xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle).*

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Djebel Nafūsa is a mountain range standing high over the Djeffara plain from Yefren to Nālūt and the Tunisian frontier. During the middle ages and the modern period, this rocky stronghold was home mainly to Ibadi Berbers. A dense network of villages and small towns flourished on the upper ridges and plateaus, so that a tenth-century geographer could assert that their number reached 300 *qurā* (Abū 'Ubayd al-Bakrī, *Kitāb al-masālik wa l-mamālik*, ed. W. McGuckin de Slane, *Description de l'Afrique septentrionale*, reprint Paris, 1965, p. 9). Al-Ya'qubī also stressed the quantity of rural estates (*diyā'*), villages, fields and buildings (*Kitāb al-buldān*, ed. T.G.J. Juynboll, Leiden, 1861, pp. 135–6). The use of terrace cultivation, the building of earth dams (called *jusūr*) against soil erosion, along with a specific management of water resources enabled crop production (in particular olive trees), associated with cattle breeding. Jean Despois, who visited the area in 1933, analysed this complex local ecosystem and highlighted the civil and religious architectural tradition (*Le Djebel Nefousa (Tripolitaine). Étude géographique*, Paris, 1935). However, scholars mainly approached the holy geography of the Djebel through literary sources and oral surveys until the Society for Libyan Studies supported three archaeological missions led by J.W. Allan (1969, 1971 and 1973) (see A. de Calassanti-Motyliniski, *Le Djebel Nefousa*, Paris, 1898; R. Basset, "Les sanctuaires du Djebel Nefousa", *Journal Asiatique*, 1899, pp. 423–70 and 1899, pp. 88–120; T. Lewicki, "Ibādītica, 1. Tasmiya šuyūḥ Nafūsa", *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, 25/2, 1961, pp. 87–120). They gave way to a first comprehensive study of 29 mosques, of which 11 had their floor plan drawn (J.W. Allan, "Some Mosques of the Jebel Nefusa", *Lybica*, IX–X, 1972, pp. 147–69). Muḥammad Warfallī, a Libyan member of the expeditions, achieved his PhD at SOAS in 1981. His book, published in 2009, still represents the most complete archaeological ground study ever achieved and includes 12 mosques (M.S.M. Warfalli, *Some Islamic Monuments in Jabal Nafūsa*, unpublished thesis, University of London, 1981, 2 vols). It contains valuable black-and-white photographs, unlike the Arabic version (*Ba'd al-āthār al-islāmiyya bi jabal Nafūsa fī Lībyā*, Mu'assasat Tāwālt al-thaqāfiyya, 2009, 5 vols). A group of Italian amateur archaeologists nevertheless explored other buildings between 2006 and 2008.

Virginie Prevost, a specialist in Maghrebi Ibadism, published this monograph six years after a study trip to Djebel Nafūsa (2010). The "Arab spring" in Libya prevented her from returning, and in her foreword she explains the limitations she encountered (p. xvi). She could not enter every sanctuary and lacked time for