

Müller could only make this important discovery by comparing al-Samarqandī's text with a great number of other dietetic monographs – starting with Galen's *De alimentorum facultatibus* – and relevant chapters of medical handbooks, references to which were given throughout the commentary. Despite these huge efforts, a considerable part of al-Samarqandī's text could not be traced in older sources. As suggested by the author (p. 336), he may have consulted further sources now lost. It is, on the other hand, also possible that he may have found some pieces of information in books belonging to other genres, such as pharmacognosy. An exhaustive analysis of the whole Arabic medical literature would, of course, have gone beyond the scope of the edition reviewed here.

The following chapter (pp. 339–439) is concerned with the foods, cooked dishes, beverages, and perfumes described in the *K. al-Aghdhiya*. Müller gave detailed accounts of each of the foodstuffs dealt with by al-Samarqandī and of their nomenclature. The deciphering of these terms is a great achievement, since many foods bear non-Arabic names often missing from the classical lexica. Many of them can barely be traced in the modern secondary literature, wherefore this commentary on the names of nourishments of the *K. al-Aghdhiya* is highly welcome to anyone interested in the nomenclature of plants, dishes, aromas, etc.

Al-Samarqandī belonged to the last creative epoch of Arabic medicine. It is not therefore surprising that explicit quotations from the *K. al-Aghdhiya* are very rare in the few important books written after the thirteenth century. In spite of this Müller is able to prove that the list of foodstuffs in al-Fārūqī's sixteenth-century compendium consists mainly of anonymous quotations from al-Samarqandī (pp. 447 f.). The volume ends with indices, a detailed Arabic–German–English glossary – unfortunately not covering the commentary – and an English summary (pp. 525–8), which make the book accessible to readers with no knowledge of German.

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JAMES T. MONROE:

The Mischievous Muse: Extant Poetry and Prose by Ibn Quzmān of Córdoba (d. AH 555/AD 1160).

(Brill Studies in Middle East Literatures.) Vol. 1: xii, 1014 pp; vol. 2: 1015–1510 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2016. €230. ISBN 978 90 04 32377 6 (hardback set).

doi:10.1017/S0041977X18000083

Al-Andalus was home to three forms of stanzaic poetry: the *musammāt* (classical); the *muwašṣah* (classical, with colloquial and about 6 per cent Romance in final verses) and the *zajal* (colloquial with a smattering of Romance vocabulary). By common consent, the Cordoban Ibn Quzmān (d. 1160 AD) is the greatest composer of *zajals*.

James Monroe has been thinking and writing about Ibn Quzmān's poetry for more than fifty years, and it is good to have this *magnum opus* that presents the kernel of his work to us.

The first volume includes all the surviving poetic pieces by Ibn Quzmān, almost all of them *zajals*, edited in a transliteration, with an English (prose) translation on

the facing page, plus notes and comments. Monroe hopes “that the form the text exhibits may be of some interest to Romanists, most of whom are unable to read that same Arabic script, whereas, in contrast, Arabists should have no problem reading the text in transliteration”. It is a view that will not be shared by Arab readers, whether Romance is involved or not. To give one example, in 102:5:2 Monroe reads *wa-l-la mā nahtāj al-ḡulām VIVO*, which he translates as “Indeed, I have no use for a live slave-boy”. There is a textual note that in the manuscript the last word in the line is *baybu* and a further note that this is the Romance *vivo*; but unless the Arab reader is sharp, Monroe’s initial cluster is baffling, and his translation *indeed* hardly points the way to the manuscript’s *wa-llāhi*.

The second volume comprises sixteen chapters devoted to analysing specific poems, mainly, though not exclusively, from a literary perspective. There is some new material here, but most chapters are revised versions of essays that have been printed before in a range of publications. It is extremely useful that they are now all together.

In my view the work gets off to a false start or, rather, no start at all. The introduction must set a record in ultra-conciseness. It runs to a mere 12 pages, including some quite lengthy footnotes. Contrast that with a bibliography of 42 pages and an index (for both volumes) of 21 pages and a total length of over 1,500 pages. Such brevity requires the reader to have wide knowledge of considerable fields of study and excellent library access. Surely, for example, there should be a bit more about the poet himself, rather than a reference to Georges Colin’s article “Ibn Quzmān” in *EF*².

The brevity also precludes any reasoned discussion of topics of serious scholarly dispute, not least the origins of Andalusian stanzaic poetry. Focusing on the *muwaššah*, Arabic sources put the beginnings of stanzaic poetry at about 900 AD, with the *zajal* somewhat later. The earliest extant poems are about 150 years later, and so effectively the early history of such poetry is lost.

Monroe disagrees. He believes that the *zajal* was the first genre to evolve, from which the *muwaššah* then sprang. However, he does not print here the arguments that he has made elsewhere. His ideas are worth consideration, but they remain hypotheses. As they provide a basis for the whole of the book, they should be re-stated at the outset.

There are also great difficulties about the metrical systems involved. Monroe opts for a dual system that takes in both Romance and Arabic scansion, with the Romance as the base element. Again the alternative, with Arabic as the base element, ought at least to be sketched out, well beyond the half paragraph dealing with Federico Corriente’s theories.

Another topic where the reader needs further enlightenment is the language used by Ibn Quzmān. Monroe is content to use “colloquial” and “vernacular” as terms of art to describe it, as has been common from the time of Ibn Sa’id (d. 1276) onwards. However, it is generally recognized that a classicizing element is brought into play whenever it suits the poet. The non-specialist needs a section on dialect features here – otherwise other works, e.g. by Corriente, have to be used.

Monroe’s description of the unique manuscript of Ibn Quzmān’s *Dīwān* is terse: “a single copy ... has survived. It was made in Safad, Palestine, around a century after our poet’s death, and is written in the Eastern Arabic script”. He might fairly have added “by an incompetent scribe with no understanding of Andalusian material”, for therein lie innumerable problems.

An expanded introduction and a text in Arabic script would need another volume, though I am sure that Monroe has to hand a text in Arabic script and other material needed.

Given the caveats about the transliteration, the text is usable, which is no mean feat with just a single manuscript available for most of the surviving material. The

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.
doi:10.1017/S0041977X18000216

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