

mentions Ibn al-Muqaffa's translation of the *Khwadāynāmag*; and Arabic and Persian historians in general only rarely acknowledge the translators of Persian books or mention them by name, so that we should not expect Ibn al-Muqaffa to be frequently mentioned in connection with his translation, which is mostly referred to by its title only, without any translator's name. However, it is true that one has to be very careful, as I also emphasized in my book (p. 128), not automatically to assume that all references to *Siyar mulūk al-'ajam* necessarily refer to Ibn al-Muqaffa's work.

All in all, Hoyland's book is an important addition to the sources of pre-Islamic, mainly Sasanian Iran, and the accuracy of the translation and some of the annotations make it also useful for a scholar well familiar with Arabic. For those struggling with Arabic sources, it is invaluable.

**Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila**  
University of Edinburgh

JAAKKO HÄMEEN-ANTTILA (ed. and trans.):

*Al-Maqrīzī's al-Ḥabar 'an al-bašar. Vol. V, Section 4: Persia and Its Kings, Part I.*

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The Bibliotheca Maqriziana series, edited by Frédéric Bauden, has the promise to become a significant step forward in our understanding of Mamluk intellectual history. Its greatest merit lies in making the works of the eminent historian and religious scholar Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Maqrīzī (766/1364–845/1442) available for the first time in critical editions and translations, based as far as possible on holograph manuscripts. The volume under review is an edition and translation by Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila of a part of al-Maqrīzī's large-scale, albeit to date little-studied, historiographical work *al-Khabar 'an al-bašar*. This volume represents the first publication from a major work of al-Maqrīzī to appear in the Bibliotheca Maqriziana series and thus constitutes a most welcome early manifestation of the success of the project.

The volume consists of an introduction (pp. 1–29), plates and a list of abbreviations and symbols (pp. 31–8), the edition proper with English translation (pp. 39–356), a bibliography (pp. 357–68), a list of quoted manuscripts (p. 369), no fewer than nine indexes (pp. 370–86), and a colour facsimile of the holograph manuscript on which the edition is mainly based (pp. 387–511).

After a very short section on the author and the work, which was published for the first time in 2013 in an uncritical and unreliable edition, the introduction situates the edited part of al-Maqrīzī's work dealing with the ancient history of pre-Islamic Persia from the Creation up to (but not including) the Sasanian period in the broader context of premodern Arabic literature about this period and region. In the course of this contextualization, Hämeen-Anttila also outlines the content of the edited text. The subsequent sections of the introduction discuss al-Maqrīzī's sources and particularly the relationship of his work to Paulus Orosius' (d. c. 418) *Historiarum adversum paganos libri vii*. Hämeen-Anttila shows that al-Maqrīzī's work contains ample material unpreserved in the only known copy of the Arabic translation of

Orosius' work and is thus highly relevant to its further study and possible reconstruction. The introduction then examines how al-Maqrīzī used his sources, based on detailed and extensive textual comparisons. This section is noteworthy both for what it generally tells us about the working methods of a prominent premodern Islamicate scholar and what it particularly reveals about the accuracy with which al-Maqrīzī quoted his sources – but also his ability to paraphrase if he wished to do so. Furthermore, Hämeen-Anttila demonstrates that al-Maqrīzī's quotation technique changed markedly towards the end of the edited text, his sources becoming ever more strongly abbreviated, a finding of importance to the study of the history of the work. The introduction ends with a description of the manuscripts used, notes on the methods of translation, and the rendering of proper names.

The edited Arabic text deals with the history of Persia from Creation through the reigns of the first three classes of Persian rulers as known to Arabic-speaking scholars of the middle period: the Pīshdādians, the Kayanids, and the Ashghānians. The edition is set in clear and easily readable print, with rubrications in the manuscript indicated in red ink. The English translation of the Arabic text is given on the facing side, with numbered paragraphs allowing for easy navigation.

One can only congratulate the editor and everybody else involved in the publication of the book on its superb quality. The introduction is concise but highly informative, the edition proper accurate and impeccable, the facsimile of high quality, and the translation readable, precise, and richly annotated. The carefully executed layout makes the book pleasant to read, and the multiple indexes allow for easy navigation. The only caveat limiting the value of the volume as a stand-alone work is that readers are referred to other, in part forthcoming publications to gain a more holistic understanding of the text of *al-Khabar 'an al-bashar*; this is in the nature of a multi-volume edition project.

With his masterful edition and translation, Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila has set very high standards for future publications in the Bibliotheca Maqriziana series and beyond. On a broader scale, the volume constitutes a powerful demonstration of what philological research can and should look like in the twenty-first century. By showing what is possible, it underlines the urgent need for critical editions in a field that far too often settles for non-scholarly and faulty, albeit easily available “editions” of its primary sources.

**Christian Mauder**

Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton

ELIAS MUHANNA:

*The World in a Book: Al-Nuwayri and the Islamic Encyclopedic Tradition.*

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*The World in a Book* is a well written analysis of one of the largest compendia of Classical Arabic literature, the early fourteenth-century *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition) by the Egyptian scholar and scribe Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333). The author, Elias Muhanna, states in his first sentence that his is “a small book