Lane gave precise references very sparsely. The editor has put together a list of the sources used by Lane (pp. 580–588), without updating the bibliographical information that was given and without adding modern details for the Arabic material, most of which was consulted by Lane in manuscript. No index has been added. There are very few misprints, although, when I hesitated at ''amadon'' (p. 216), I discovered a word new to me, ''amadou''.

To review a work written in the first half of the nineteenth century, which has appeared in print only at the beginning of the twenty first century, is a disorientating task. It can only be viewed as an historical document and a splendid monument to the scholarship of its period.

D. S. Richards

Identification and Identity in Classical Arabic Poetry. By M. C. Lyons. pp. 366. Warminster, E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 1999.

This is a forbidding book. The ''Contents'' page confronts the reader with a stark landscape distressingly free of signposts: ''Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, etc. . . .''. As the book progresses, the chapter subheadings (''Time'', ''Space'', ''Poetry'', ''Identity'', etc) are gradually replaced by lines across the page. Generally, the prose consists of descriptive strings of translated verses of Arabic poetry organized topically. From a stylistic point of view, the book seems an exercise in what a premodern Arab writer would have called ''*nathr al-naẓm*'' (prosification of verse).

I have taken the liberty of offering the following expanded Table of Contents for potential readers.

Introduction: Identification and Identity in Arabic poetry
I Pre-Islamic poetry
II The *Mukhaḍramūn*: Arabic poetry and the Emergence of Islam
III Early Umayyad poetry – Dhū 'l-Rumma, Miskīn al-Dārimī, al-Ṭirimmāḥ, and Abū 'l-Hindī
IV The Great Triad – Jarīr, Farazdaq, and al-Akhṭal
V Early Abbasid poetry: Ibn al-Rūmī, Dīk al-Jinn al-Ḥimṣī, and Isḥāq al-Mawṣilī
VI Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī
VII Abū Nuwās
VIII al-Mutanabbī and Abū Firās al-Hamdānī
IX Majnūn, Jamīl and ʿUmar b. Abī Rabīʿa
X The *Muwashshaḥ*
XI The *Kāna wa-kān*
Conclusion: Poets and Storytellers

Despite the difficulties it presents, the book offers valuable insights to students of medieval Arabic literature. While he does not claim to have addressed a complete corpus of premodern Arabic poetry, Lyons has sifted through a sample that is extensive in chronological scope, poets represented, and sheer quantity of verse. This book seems to represent the notes Lyons recorded along the way. As such it can be used in a variety of ways, some more effective than others (more on this below).

The problem Lyons seeks to address is the predominance of the first person in Arabic poetry. Readers interested in pursuing this topic are advised to read the Introduction, sections marked ''Identity'' and ''Poetry'' (the last sections in unmarked chapters) and the Conclusion. Lyons suggests that poets presented ''challenges to identification'' that their audiences had to recognize. Such challenges included the identification of the specific role the poet had assumed: the hero (and lover/drinker), wise man, traveller, or ''perceiver'' (*shāʿir*). In the last role the poet offered his perspective on reality. His imagery challenged the audience to recognize its background in the literary tradition as

well as the distinctive twist he had given it. Other such poetic challenges might include extended metaphors, hyperbole, metonymy, riddles, and "substitution codes" (i.e. "pomegranates" equals cheeks or breasts).

For Lyons, the "combined creativity" of poet and audience resulted in Arabic poetry. In tracing the evolution of this relationship over time Lyons presents a species of literary history. (It should be noted that the book does not purport to be a literary history). In its capacity as literary history this book presents few surprises. The *mukhaḍramūn* (and the Umayyad poets for the most part) continued to compose poetry in what was essentially a pre-Islamic mode. The most important change came in the cosmopolitan setting of ʿAbbasid Irāq with the substitution of culture as the shared exclusive ideal for poet and audience over that of tribal heroism.

What is perhaps most significant in literary-historical terms is the extent to which Lyon's approach challenges the focus of scholarship on Arabic literary history. Rather than scouring conventional material for turning points and creative geniuses its conventionality is precisely the point. Lyons shows separate strata coexisting and even reversals in course. For example, Jarīr and al-Akhṭal still use tribal praise in their caliphal panegyric (p. 95). Abū Tammām's imagery is not uniformly innovative. He employs conventional imagery and simple hyperbole (p. 143). Abū Nuwās attacks the desert motifs for one audience and boasts his mastery of them to another (p. 164). Al-Mutanabbī reverted to a pre-Islamic role (p. 224).

In Lyons's Koheleth-like assessment even the most innovative poets (e.g., ʿUmar b. Abī Rabīʿa and Abū Nuwās) are shown to have rearranged or manipulated preexisting materials. Lyons compares the poet's creative process to that of the storyteller and one of his stock characters; the Man of Wiles. Mutanabbī's hyperbole images can be compared to the disguises or to the "mirror of transformation" employed by the Man of Wiles. ". . . [T]he pattern of change that replaced the lover poet with the glib seducer of the *Kāna wa-Kān* poems can be seen in the stories of ʿAlī al-Zaibaq, a crafty hero whose deserts are the urban underworlds of Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad." (p. 290) If a bit of *ḥikma* were to round off Lyons's exploration of Arabic poetry the sentiments of Kaʿb b. Zuhayr ("I do not think that we say anything except what has come back, being repeated and said again") or ʿAntara b. Shaddād ("have the poets left a single spot for a patch to be sewn?") (p. 58) seem apposite.

In this book "identity" refers to both the extent to which a poet's work reflects the circumstances of his life as well as his distinctive contribution as a poet. Whether or not the injuries Dhū 'l-Rumma refers to in a poem were real or not (p. 71) and similar questions do not compel this reader. In addition, Lyons's observations on the stylistic features that distinguish Abū Tammām, Abū Nuwās, or al-Mutanabbī seem cursory. His attention to biographical identity has one major benefit in the identification of anomalous poems that often purport to reflect the poet's experience. For example, in a poem by Dīk al-Jinn al-Ḥimṣī the *ṭayf al-khayāl* (phantom image of the beloved) becomes the ghost of the poet's murdered wife. (p. 126)

Lyons concentrated on the poetry itself. While this decision is certainly understandable, the resulting unwillingness to grapple with some major secondary sources mars some of his observations that are of a literary-historical nature. The bibliography lists works by Wolfhart Heinrichs, Renate Jacobi, Philip Kennedy, James Montgomery and Stefan Sperl. Yet one would have hoped that Lyons's discussion of the development of the concepts of time, reality and love in early Arabic poetry would have addressed Renate Jacobi's theories. Similarly, the idea that pre-Islamic poetry articulated various heroic roles was explored in detail by James Montgomery, but it is left to the reader to sort out how Lyons might have responded to Montgomery's argument. Observations on Abū Nuwās's manipulation of pre-existing bacchic tropes similarly fail to make sustained reference to Kennedy's work on this subject. This impact of mannerism (or "phantastic poetry"), explored by Heinrichs and Sperl, cannot be assessed given the selection of material the author has made. Abū 'l-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī, for example, is conspicuously absent. On the other hand, Lyons's treatment of ʿUmar b. Abī Rabīʿa's

relationship to the *'udhrī* tradition, of Umayyad poetry as a whole and of the *kāna wa-kān* genre stand out from other comparable secondary works.

Readers interested in particular poets or groups of poets will find this book's discussions of them useful. Chapters that treat several poets commonly compare them with each other, an approach that sometimes yields fruitful observations as in the cases of al-Buḥturī's and Abū Tammām's contrasting views of poetic inspiration and Abū Firās al-Hamdānī's and al-Mutanabbī's differing representations of personal experience.

Lyons's lavishly detailed discussions of poetic imagery and, more importantly, the attention he paid to the accumulation and revision of conventional images make this book a valuable source of Arabic poetic motifs. Unfortunately, while the book offers a great deal to readers interested in pursuing particular themes or motifs, neither the book's appendix nor its index suffice for this purpose. Take the fly, which connotes bravery or presages fertile land in pre-Islamic poetry (p. 10). The appendix lists three verses dealing with flies. Yet five other examples of the image of the fly are given elsewhere in the book. Several examples are given of striking images describing horses' hooves landing on rocky ground (pp. 21, 57, 203). Only a few appear in the appendix (under "horses"). References to specific locales, biblical or qur'anic figures, verses, and events in Islamic history can be found in the "Space" and "Time" sections of each chapter but not in the appendix or index. Those interested in topics such as Christians and Christianity or the legality of wine drinking viewed through the prism of Arabic poetry would find numerous references in this book. In fairness, the appendix is described as "descriptive rather than comprehensive". This does not do justice to the book's rich detail. Moreover, in the absence of the kind of comprehensive indices with which Lyons has previously spoiled this reader in *The Arabian Epic*, the amount of detail given in this book tends to obscure the argument. A determined reader is sure to encounter references to various topics of interest but they may be difficult to find.

The book includes students of comparative literature in its intended audience. In the Introduction and the Conclusion Lyons compares the roles of Arab poets to West African, Chinese, Amazonian, Gaelic and Greek traditions, among others. Throughout the bulk of the book, however, he generally makes comparisons with biblical, classical, and medieval European literatures. Some comparisons are printed in Greek (with or without accompanying translation). Some of these comparisons (e.g. "The Arab Sir Philip Sydney" (p. 84), the "Arab Horace" p. 131, and an "Arab Callimachus" p. 133), seem to demonstrate little more than the author's considerable erudition. Nevertheless, the comparative value of the book is significant enough that it deserves a better comparative index. The "Literary Index" provided is spotty. It lists Lyons's comparisons to Ausonius but not his comparisons to the Bible.

MARK WAGNER

THE BIOGRAPHICAL TRADITION IN SUFISM. THE *ṬABAQĀT* GENRE FROM AL-SULAMĪ TO JĀMĪ. By JAWID A. MOJADDEDI. pp. 230. Richmond, Curzon Press, 2001.

The *ṭabaqāt* genre encompasses a wide variety of biographical works which, typically, cover the history of a group of individuals specialised in a particular field of knowledge or expertise, from *ḥadīth* scholars, *qaḍī*s or jurisprudents on the one hand, to physicians, poets or musicians on the other. These works are commonly arranged chronologically and subdivided into consecutive generations (*ṭabaqāt*), though they may occasionally be ordered differently, for example according to degrees of merit. In this useful book, Jawid Mojaddedi has examined six Sufi biographical texts, three in Arabic and three in Persian, all of which he has classed as *ṭabaqāt* works. His study is divided into three parts, extending, in all, over six centuries of Sufi biographical writing. Part One examines three works written in the