

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Glossar bibliothekarischer Fachtermini: Arabisch-Deutsch. By Hanna Repp. Lehrmaterialien / Landesspracheninstitut Nordrhein-Westfalen; Bd. 4.5. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz in Kommission, 2001. Pp. 215; 30 cm. ISBN: 3447043881 (pbk.)

The present work was put together from teaching materials and is intended as a teaching tool for catalogers of Arabic materials in (German-speaking) courses at the Landesspracheninstitut Nordrhein-Westfalen. Consisting of an alphabetically arranged list of Arabic terms, a set of systematic tables and a bibliography of reference works, the *Glossar* is intended for catalogers who have mastered the basic structure of the Arabic language and script. It is expressly designed to facilitate cataloging of printed materials, both monographs and serial publications. The transliteration follows the German DIN 31635 standard, with the exception of the letter ‘*ain*, where the author decided to use the superscript form of the letter “*c*” to enhance clarity (p. 11).

The alphabetical glossary (pp. 31–106) is arranged in the order of the Arabic alphabet and not by trilateral roots as in a typical Arabic dictionary. It consists of terms and phrases that were extracted from representative specimens to provide a vast array of sample terms and phrases as they occur in materials that are to be cataloged. The glossary does not include library-related terminology in Arabic usually found in specialized bilingual dictionaries. Individual entries consist of the term or phrase in Arabic, the transliteration, and the German translation. Translated terms appropriately include see-references to systematic tables in the appendix. Terms and phrases governed by cataloging rules are annotated with the pertinent citation referring to the German cataloging rules (*Regeln für die alphabetische Katalogisierung in wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken*).

In the systematic tables in the “Anhang” (appendix, pp. 107–215) the terms in the glossary are rearranged into discrete categories. Categories include for instance author entries (“Verfasserangaben”), titles (“Titulaturen”), corporate authors (“Körperschaften”), a list of places of publication (“Verlagsorte”), etc. Other tables summarize the Islamic months of the lunar year, the Syrian, Libyan, Coptic and European solar months, ordinal feminine and masculine numbers from one to thirty, and national currencies. Another table compares the DIN 31635 (1982) standard of transliteration with the transliteration of the 1997 ALA-LC

Romanization tables (p. 206–208). This table was added to facilitate searching in American online catalogs (p. 11). Formulas for the conversion of Hijra and Coptic years to Christian years are provided as well. The bibliography (pp. 210–215) includes books, articles and Web sites in Western languages as well as in Arabic on (German) cataloging rules and transliteration standards, works on the vocalization and analysis of personal names, date conversion, and encyclopedias and lexica.

Throughout the volume, black-and-white facsimile illustrations are used to show real-life occurrences of terms and phrases in the Glossar. Illustrations include title pages of (multi-volume) monographs and serial publications, reproductions of imprints from different publishing houses, and sample pages of traditional works showing main text (*salb*) with interlinear commentary and marginalia (*hāshiyāt*) (p. 136).

The volume constitutes a thoughtfully compiled teaching tool that provides the student with a rich sample of real-life examples extracted from Arabic materials. The systematic arrangement and clear presentation extend the Glossar's usefulness beyond its primary function of a text book to serve practicing catalogers as a handy reference work. Libraries which serve a library information studies program that includes cataloging courses should consider acquiring it. After reviewing this volume, one wishes that somebody would produce a similar work in support of Arabic language catalogers at American libraries.

CHRISTOF GALLI

DUKE UNIVERSITY

E. W. Lane Arabic-English Lexicon [CD-ROM]. Vaduz, Liechtenstein : Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation [publisher] ; Cairo, Egypt : Tradigital Cairo [producer], ©2003 (TraDigital Stuttgart Electronic Publishing and Conservation Technologies GmbH, Ludwigstr. 26, 70176 Stuttgart, Tel: +49 711 669 78 14; E-Mail: info@tradigital.de; Internet: <http://www.tradigital.de>. Also available in the US from Fons Vitae, 49 Mockingbird Valley Drive, Louisville KY 40207 USA; Tel: (+001)(502) 897-3641; Fax: (+001)(502) 893-7373; E-mail: fonsvitaeky@aol.com; Internet: <http://www.fonsvitaeky.com/> Price USD150 + shipping.)

Edward W. Lane's (1801–1876) Arabic-English Lexicon (originally published: London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1863–93; and

legally reprinted or pirated in the same or other multi-volume formats, in among other editions: New York, F. Ungar Pub. Co. [1955–56]; Beirut, Lebanon : Libraire du Liban, 1980; Cambridge, England : Islamic Texts Society, ©1984; New Delhi : Asian Educational Services, 1985) is the only comprehensive Arabic to English lexicon for use with classical Arabic texts. Unfortunately, comprehensive though it is — meaning that entries contain more than glosses and a few examples, but include verifiable citations and excerpts of real texts — it was never completed. Stanley Lane-Poole (1854–1931) edited it and added a memoir of Lane. Despite the supplementary material in the final volume, the coverage still stops practically in the letter *Qāf*, with the remaining root-letters of the Arabic alphabet treated only in a summary manner. *Wörterbuch der klassischen arabischen Sprache / auf Grund der Sammlungen von August Fischer, Theodor Nöldeke, Hermann Reckendorf und anderer Quellen hrsg. durch die Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft*, published Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1957– takes up where Lane stops, but WKAS still, after nearly fifty years reaches only as far as *layl* in vol. II:33. The French attempt at a comprehensive lexicon, *Dictionnaire arabe-français-anglais (langue classique et moderne) = Arabic/French/English dictionary / par Régis Blachère, Moustafa Chouémi et Claude Denizeau*, published Paris, G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose [c1964–] has stopped in 1988 with vol. 4:46, in the letter *Hā*. Thus, one must rely on other less comprehensive Arabic-English (or French) dictionaries or lexicons (e.g., Hava, Dozy, Biberstein-Kazimirski, or even Wehr) or on one of the mediæval or later Arabic lexicons (e.g., Ibn Manzūr’s *Lisān al-‘Arab*, Fīrūzabādī’s *Muḥīṭ*, Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī’s *Tāj al-‘Arūs*, Zamakhsharī’s *Asās al-Balāghah*, Ibn Sīdah’s *al-Muḥkam*, Jawharī’s *al-Ṣiḥāh*, and others, many of whose works Lane relies on and cites).

The Lane lexicon on CD-ROM is a most welcome addition to our lexicographical inventory, even in its incomplete state, and the producers have our gratitude for their highly commendable work. The electronic Lane contains the entire work as printed. Although the printed work was scanned from a Cambridge University Library copy, the images produced by the scanning operation were not processed by Optical Character Recognition (OCR) into readable and thus fully searchable text. The lexicon is rather an enormous collection of some 3000+ graphic files (.gif) (in 577MB) — probably representing the 3064 pages of the original, plus the software and associated files to run the program (for a total of 3,136 files in 606MB). These files reside on the host computer’s

hard disk after installation. The CD serves to install the program, and after installation of the program, when inserted into the CD-drive, as it must be for the program to operate, functions as a security device to prevent unauthorized use on multiple computers by those who have not purchased the product. (I must say that as priced at USD150, purchasing the CD does not present a great financial burden. It is considerably less expensive than the print version, at about \$350 for the two volume reduction.) Each main entry (based on an Arabic root) in the lexicon is tagged for searching and associated with the proper graphic file(s) for display of the text. Thus, one searches by root-letter combinations, and the search results are the appropriate entries displayed on the computer screen as page images from the print. Within this limited this structure (tagged graphics), the lexicon cannot be searched for text within the entries — something one cannot, of course, do so in the print version either.

Minimum requirements are modest: Windows 95 or higher (Arabic not required — except that Windows must be configured to accept Arabic input from the keyboard if one wishes to search by keying in Arabic roots instead of using the on-screen key matrix), 486 processor, 16MB of RAM, 650 MB Free Hard Disk space. The CD-ROM should run automatically; if not, one must type D[rive]:\Run, where D is the CD-ROM drive. Macintosh computers are not supported.

The Preface contains (as do most of the print editions, excepting the reduced): Lane's extensive Preface (December 1862), where the structure of the Lexicon is introduced and its sources are enumerated and discussed; Stanley Lane Pools' Editor's Preface (written in July 1877, after Lane's death in August 1876), in which the editorial work and the compilation of the incomplete materials into the supplement are described; an extensive Memoir of Lane edited from his scholarly *Nachlass* by his nephew, Stanley Lane Pool — The account of the compilation of the Lexicon is especially interesting —; Errata; and a Postscript on the supplementary material (1893).

I offer some observations, after working with the program for some time:

The on-screen key matrix, noted variously as “Virtual Arabic Keyboard” and “Arabic alphabet palette” for entering text (click on the desired letters of the root and then on “Find”), includes the selectable by click letters of the Arabic alphabet. As typed from the Arabic keyboard or keyed from the matrix, the letter are supposed to display in

the search box. This display feature does not function on my Gateway desktop computer, which runs Windows 2000. This is a minor annoyance. I find that if I immediately begin another search by entering text in the search box, I consistently encounter an entry not found error message; yet, if I repeat the search, I get the desired results. If, however, I use the “New Search” button, the search is consistently successful. This is a bigger, and inexplicable, annoyance. If one keys in a search for a root that does not exist in the lexicon, there are no results returned, and a message to that effect is displayed.[†]

Printing can be limited to a selection of text or an entire entry. One can print to a printer or to Adobe Acrobat Distiller to produce text (which is not really text but another graphic, and thus useless otherwise). Moreover, the graphic files (.gif) as supplied are rather mysterious in nature: I cannot display them in any other graphic program, and I cannot convert them to text with OCR software. This inscrutable feature must be for security.

One can scroll through a page by using the page-down/up slider and navigate to other pages or entries with the forward/backward arrows. There is also a zoom in or out feature.

Although installation was exceedingly slow because of the great number of files to be copied, and loading up the program is also somewhat slow, search results are displayed instantaneously. Very nice, attributable, no doubt, to the data residing on the hard disk, rather than on the CD.

There is a help facility which offers sufficient help limited to instructions on the operation of the program.

According to the help facility, searches may be saved for later retrieval by clicking on the icon at the bottom of the screen after performing a new search. The icon on my computer is, however, blank but functions to bring into view the previous searches or to close them.

Material which appears in the supplementary volume is so noted (“See Supplement” — click on the link to the supplement at the bottom of the screen; click to return to the main entry), and material covered in both the main body of the lexicon and additionally in the supplement

[†] Subsequently, I installed the *Lexicon* on another computer, a Dell Latitude notebook L400, having capabilities similar to the Gateway but running Windows XP; the program ran flawlessly on the Dell.

is marked and links provided to the supplement. Lane's print cross-references are not functioning links in the electronic version.

Some of the pages have been sloppily scanned from the original to produce skewed pages on the screen. Otherwise, the text is very clear, or rather as clear as the slightly crude type of the original print version.

Lane's lexicon CD indeed offers a few more features and conveniences than the print: It is faster and easier to search the electronic version with a keyboard than to fumble with the eight-volume print set while flipping through its pages to locate entries (as one creates wobbly piles on the table and inattentively lets volumes crash onto the floor). I own the two-volume reduction, and I have difficulty working with the extremely small type. The electronic version is much preferred in this regard. Yet, the inability to search full text and to extract text from the graphics in the electronic version is a serious detraction that should be fixed by producing the full text from the graphic files. This will be laborious task, no doubt, because of the inadequate (and extremely expensive) Arabic ORC software available, a problem very likely compounded by the print edition's use of such crude Arabic (and roman) type. Nevertheless, the task must be accomplished, even if that means heavy editing and manually keying the Arabic (and likely the roman too).

Lane's lexicon on CD is an invaluable tool for the Arabist and is highly recommended for purchase by individuals and libraries, which can network the CD for campus access.

JONATHAN RODGERS

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The Adam of Two Edens: Poems. By Mahmoud Darwish, translated by Husain Haddawi, et al. Edited by Munir Akash and Daniel Moore. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000. Pp. 206. \$19.95 (pbk) ISBN 0-8156-0710-5.

Munir Akash and Daniel Moore include just thirteen of Mahmoud Darwish's poems in this English language anthology. They have been rendered by eight different translators well-regarded in modern Arabic letters, so that the English best reflects the original language and sentiment. The aim of the editors is to better acquaint the world with Darwish's more recent work, which demonstrates the extent of his development since his earliest days as a Palestinian resistance writer. Much

of the world is already aware that as Palestine's tacit national poet, Darwish has devoted his life not only to the cause of the Palestinian people, but also to perfecting and expanding his poetic abilities. This collection reveals that he is clearly succeeding. Though one need not have experienced the earlier Darwish to appreciate these later poems, the seasoned reader is genuinely surprised by this collection's broader and more sophisticated topics. As the editors state in the introduction, the poetry of this collection demonstrates that Darwish has been transformed over time "from an imitator and poet of relatively easy direct statement into an internationally acclaimed artist of unusual insight and incomparably sophisticated technique who transforms astronomical expanses of human emotions into the clear crystal of poetry" (p. 25).

Because there is no lack of oppression in the world, Darwish's poetry speaks to people in diverse countries and regions around the world. Darwish's poem "Speech of the Red Indian" (p. 129–145) clearly demonstrates his understanding of the suffering of other peoples. For his devotion to the oppressed masses as well as his skill, Darwish has received prestigious awards including the Lotus Prize (1969), the Lenin Peace Prize (1983), France's highest medal of literary honor, and the Knight of Arts and Letters Award (1993). In December of 2001, Darwish earned the Lannan Prize for Cultural Freedom. In addition to the award, the Lannan Foundation will publish a collection of Darwish's poems in English sometime this Fall [*The Raven's Ink : a chapbook*. Translated and edited by Munir Akash and Carolyn Forché ; with Amira El-Zein and Sinan Antoon. [Santa Fe: Lannan Foundation, 2002?].

Though all poems in this collection deserve deliberate and thoughtful contemplation, gems among the thirteen include "The Well", "Ruba'iyat", and "O Helen, What a Rain". The first eloquently evokes both the unknown, colorful history that might be associated with an ancient well and time-tested stories from sources, such as the Bible, that have incorporated wells and all of their life-affirming and life-sustaining qualities. Moreover, "The Well" conveys the melancholic tone one would expect to feel if alone beside such an erstwhile hub of social activity. "Ruba'iyat" recalls an element of the Palestinian exile's exasperation that is typical of Darwish, but in this case the effect transfers to any human soul weighed down with the toils of life, the ceaselessness of idle chatter, daily drudgery and life's injustices. "O Helen, What a Rain", one of the briefer poems in the collection, in fine poetic form contrasts the falling rain in an arid region with the yearning of dried up hearts

and souls for beauty and love.

The *Adam of Two Edens* would be a beneficial addition to any library that seeks seriously to collect the works of major world poets and/or significant Middle Eastern authors and activists. Though much of Darwish's poetry is available in English in diverse journals and anthologies that sample Middle Eastern literature, collections such as this devoted to a single artist better facilitate the study of individual writers and their methodology and development within the literary craft.

CHRISTINE DYKGRAAF

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Fārīd, his Verse, and his Shrine. Th. Emil Homerin. 2nd ed. Cairo: The American University in Cairo, 2001. Pp. xiv, 162. ISBN: 9774246683 (pbk.)

This is a paperback edition of the 1994 work which since its original publication has gone out of print. It corrects a few minor errors, and adds a preface updating the current situation of the poet's shrine and a sizeable bibliography of relevant works that have appeared in the few years since the first edition.

ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Fārīd (1181–1235) was an Egyptian poet and scholar, whose fame rests on his mystical poems. The eloquence and poetic beauty of the poems are nearly universally acknowledged. But the subject matter drew controversy: first from those who misunderstood the conventions of referring to God as the beloved, and spiritual ecstasy in terms of wine; to them the poetry was merely licentious, or they found the symbology distasteful. Others found the idea of such communion with God heretically pantheistic. These same features endeared Ibn al-Fārīd to the Sufis, though it is disputed whether the poet was a Sufi himself.

Although the title suggests the poetry will have a role in the discussion, it is only broached in the introduction, giving the reader a taste of the mystic, allegorical style in which intangible ecstasies and communions, or as often separations from the Divine, are versified. For this the reader should consult Homerin's other volume, *ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Fārīd: Sufi Verse, Sainly Life* (New York: Paulist Press, 2001) which is a translation of the poetry with commentary (and, despite its title, only touches on the biography). The difficulties of Ibn al-Fārīd's

poetry are not those of *recherche* vocabulary; lexically they are intelligible. The difficulty is in the interpretation of multivalent symbol, conventions from *ghazal* love poetry interweft with religious connotations and Ibn al-Fāriḍ's own creativity. Thus in one line the full moon (the Beloved, or the radiance of Muhammad according to Arberry) is the goblet for an ineffable wine like the sun (esoteric knowledge) passed by a winebearer like a crescent moon (the ascetic wasted by fasting and bent by devotions), when the stars (illumination?) appear. Many other lines offer similarly convoluted concision. When a *litterateur* asked the poet's permission to write a two volume commentary on his work, Ibn al-Fāriḍ answered that he could have written two volumes on each line.

This volume skillfully participates in the reëvaluation of classical Arabic biography and narrative in general, contextualizing the accounts to display meaning beyond the overt texts. Ibn al-al-Fāriḍ's earthly life was not so dramatic. His reputation for sanctity was recorded and probably improved upon by his grandson, who with subsequent hagiographers endowed him with miracles during and after his life. Homerin tracks the poet's posthumous career, which was as multilayered as his verse. It played out in religion and politics, and was recorded more in history and biography than in literary works, though the poetry attracted its critics and commentators. With time he accumulated many miracles, and cures and other benefits were attributed to his intercession. In the meantime his poetry became a touchstone for religious concerns. Homerin does a good job illuminating the secular and vested interests that may have motivated Ibn al-al-Fāriḍ's detractors and proponents. Some were sincerely outraged by religious questions. But theological factions were allied with Mamluk political figures, who distributed the benefices of holy offices. Ultimately Ibn al-Fāriḍ's defenders prevailed; but even his opponents took their place in his legend. The comeuppance of his foes became a trope: they were disgraced, and came to bad ends or recanted and allowed that they had always enjoyed his poetry.

Homerin's prose is a little dry. It passes without remark when the poet's son describes his father as the handsomest of men, and himself as resembling him more than anyone else. Perhaps Homerin's method credits the reader with the perspicuity to form conclusions from the texts without authorial comment.

The book ends elegiacally, as in the last two centuries the saint's popularity has declined, and his shrine has fallen to neglect. The poet retains the admiration of readers, however, and in a sense his repute has come full circle to his original poetical fame.

Until the first edition of this book, there had been little serious scholarship on Ibn al-Fāriḍ in Western languages since Nicholson and Nallino early in the 20th century. Homerin's "Additional Bibliography" in the new addition shows a slight increase, but his works remain the only recent monographs in English on this important figure, a fact which — in addition to their merits — makes them essential.

WALTER OLLER[†]

BROWN UNIVERSITY

The Art of Reciting the Qur'an. Kristina Nelson. Cairo & New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2002. Pp. xxviii + 246. ISBN 977-424-594-6. (Paper) \$24.50.

Originally published in 1985 by the University of Texas Press, this reissue of *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an* comes as a welcome addition to a body of scholarly literature which exists at the intersection of seemingly formal areas of inquiry in Arabic linguistics, Islamic studies, ethnomusicology, cultural anthropology, and Middle Eastern studies. Much more than a simple exposé of the tradition of Qur'ānic recitation, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an* concerns itself with the act of recitation as an "expression of the totality of the cultural system of which it is a part" (xvi) and argues that the very tradition itself — understood here as a normative and rule governed act both constrained and shaped by its embedment in a broader cultural system — is ultimately a 'coming-to-terms' of the human encounter with a perceived divine other. For Nelson, arenas of normative action such as transmission, reception and

[†] Our colleague, Walter Oller, Joukowsky Family Middle Eastern Librarian at Brown University, died Oct. 3, 2003. Oller, who was 49 when he died, helped build the Library's collections in Middle Eastern studies and also took on responsibility for collections for Egyptology and modern Greek studies. Oller came to Brown in May of 2001 from New York University, where he had been assistant to the Middle Eastern studies librarian, and where he was working on a doctorate in Middle Eastern studies. He completed and defended his dissertation last spring, while working at Brown.

performance, although apparently discrete units of analysis, comprise a dense web of mutually-constituting interconnections, the whole being ordered along culturally determined lines.

Based largely on fieldwork conducted in Cairo in the late 1970's, *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an* takes the reader on an ethnographic/ethnomusicological tour of the most prestigious tradition of Qur'ānic recitation—the Egyptian—and along the way attempts to flesh-out the ways in which this tradition exists within social contexts. Choosing as her main heuristic the concept of 'meaning', Nelson asks: "what does the recitation of the Qur'an mean within the tradition? How is meaning communicated? How has it come to mean what it does? (and) What is the effect of the meaning on the tradition?" (xvi). For Nelson, 'meaning' is dynamic, changeable, and inextricably tied to those interlocking social and cultural patterns which ultimately come to determine the shape of both performance and perception.

For Nelson, a true understanding or aesthetic appreciation of Qur'ānic recitation must begin with an understanding of the essential oral/aural nature of the Qur'ānic text itself. Supported by a healthy selection of examples, chapter 1 devotes itself to explaining this, showing how the very sound of the Qur'ānic language has been prioritized throughout the text's history and how, as a consequence, "scholars and listeners recognize that the ideal beauty and inimitability of the Qur'an lie not in the content and order of the message, on the one hand, and in the elegance of the language, on the other, but in the use of the very sound of the language to convey specific meaning" (13). Prefigured by Arberry in the mid-1950's (*The Holy Koran*, 1953, and, *The Koran Interpreted*, 1955) and further refined by Michael Sells in his recently 'contentious' book (*Approaching the Qur'an*, 1999), this notion undergirds much of Nelson's analysis.

Chapter 2 ("*Tajwīd*") deals with the system of rules regulating correct recitation, offering a general survey of its main features and a summary of its major elements, namely: articulation, duration, and sectioning. In short, this chapter further refines the notion presented earlier, positing that the rules of *tajwīd* ultimately serve to preserve and perpetuate the essential oral/aural nature of the Qur'ān; for such rules not only ensure the correct reproduction of sound, but more importantly allow for the conveyance of the 'meaning' of a text "set apart from all other texts and experiences" (31).

Chapter 3 (“*The Samāʾ Polemic*”) tackles the perennial question of the licitness of music and musical performance in Islam. In Nelson’s reading, this debate ultimately revolves around an attempt to deal with the perceived visceral power and attractiveness of music on the one hand and notions of sober, morally idealized, communal propriety on the other. In essence, Nelson attempts to show how such debates have touched upon perceptions of Qurʾānic recitation vis-à-vis music, asserting that historically the issue has been characterized by irresolution and ambivalence rather than any sustained pronouncements one way or the other.

Chapters 4 and 5 deal with the main issues surrounding the Egyptian tradition of melodic or artful style of Qurʾānic recitation (*mujawwad*) such as the central importance of oral instruction, the conceptual and scholarly resources drawn upon by professional reciters, the various technicalities which combine to form an ideal performance of artful Qurʾānic recitation, and the ways in which reciter and audience interact along a formalized continuum of expectation and exchange. Chapter 4 (“The Ideal Recitation of the Qurʾan”) discusses the ways in which artful Qurʾānic recitation is perceived in both textual and oral tradition, coming to the conclusion that Qurʾānic recitation should be “an engrossing religious experience and not simply a transmission of information” (99) for both reciter and audience. Chapter 5 (“The Sound of Recitation”) attempts to account for the ways in which the actual sound of artful recitation functions in terms of audience expectations, perceptions, and ideals. Drawing a distinction between the personal, unornamented style of recitation (*murattal*) and the public *mujawwad* style, this chapter brings out those factors which both shape and constrain public recitation, explaining through a series of examples the reasons why the *mujawwad* style has earned such a prominent position in contemporary Egyptian society.

The final two chapters of the book deal with the issue of how the ideals and norms discussed in the previous chapters are actually reproduced on the ground. The ethnographic heart of the book, these two chapters explore the institutional structures (both formal and informal) which serve as stage and setting for Qurʾānic recitation in Egypt. Whereas chapter 6 (“Maintaining the Ideal Recitation of the Qurʾan”) deals with the day-to-day details of learning, teaching, performing, and the features of Qurʾānic recitation as a professionalized vocation, chapter 7 (“Overlap and Separation: The Dynamics of Perception and Response”) explicitly addresses an unresolved tension running throughout

the book, namely “the dichotomy of the perception [read: ‘meaning’] of Qurʾānic recitation as a unique art and the response to it as music” (155). It is here where the full implications of Nelson’s ethnography come out, for through a well-documented series of examples she convincingly shows that although “certain aspects of the musical art are officially admitted . . . a separation between the art of Qurʾānic recitation and the art of music is carefully maintained, in terms of both regulating the sound and regulating the perception of that sound” (186).

Throughout the book Nelson pays close attention to the nuanced layers of her subject and as an active participant in the tradition of Qurʾānic recitation herself, is able to present the reader with a lucid reading of a complex and layered socio-cultural phenomenon. The book as a whole is well written, illustrated, and produced; and the selected bibliography and appendices are informative and well placed. Although, by Nelson’s own admission in the postscript, a bit dated in parts, *The Art of Reciting the Qurʾān* will most certainly serve as the standard introduction to the subject for many years to come.

ERIK S. OHLANDER

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Colors of Enchantment: Theater, Dance, Music, and the Visual Arts of the Middle East. Edited by Sherifa Zuhur. Cairo, Egypt: The American University in Cairo Press, 2001. Pp. 456. ISBN: 977-424-607-1 (Paperback)

Colors of Enchantment, a companion volume to Sherifa Zuhur’s 1998 *Images of Enchantment: Visual and Performing Arts of the Middle East*, continues Zuhur’s project to describe and analyze the contemporary arts in the Middle East. This new volume expands her earlier exploration of dance, music and the visual arts in the region and includes a new large section devoted to theater.

Colors of Enchantment includes twenty-two articles written by contributors from fields such as anthropology, history, literature, and philosophy; and, as Zuhur notes in her introduction, many of the authors, including Zuhur herself, are both scholars and practitioners of the arts. The articles in the collection vary in style and quality. The volume includes a variety of types of articles: everything from adapted newspaper essays, to chapters from dissertations, to interviews with artists,

which makes for an interesting mix. The overall quality of the articles is good, though some articles are exceptionally well written and thought provoking, while others, unfortunately, fall a bit short of the mark. Some of my favorite articles include an eloquent essay by Edward Said about the belly-dancer Tahia Carioca; a fascinating scholarly analysis, by Eve M. Troutt Powell, on the use of blackface in turn of the century Egyptian theater; and an informative article on the history of Palestinian Hakawati theater, by Reuven Snir, that provides insight into life, culture, and modes of resistance in the occupied territories.

Zuhur's project is a large one. Attempting to cover a topic as varied as the contemporary arts in the Middle East, that encompasses so many different art forms and countries, an editor can only hope to provide the reader with glimpses into aspects of the topic. While it could be said that the scope of the book is almost too large, the volume does provide an excellent starting place for an examination of the arts in the Middle East and opens the door to further study and inquiry. Also, in addition to providing an overview of aspects of the contemporary arts in the Middle East, one of the book's major strengths is that many of its articles address issues that are also important to the study of the Middle East in other disciplines. Issues such as nationalism, identity, and modernity are threaded throughout the articles and make the book a valuable resource for any student or scholar doing work on the region, even if the work is not related directly to the arts. *Colors of Enchantment* would be a useful addition to any Middle East collection as well as any arts collection.

One thing I found disappointing about the book is that some of the articles did not seem to be current with the volume's 2001 copyright date. Although many of the articles provide historical information or information that is not time sensitive, several articles ended the discussion of their topics in the early 1990s. I believe the articles could have been more interesting and relevant to a 2002 reader if they had been more up-to-date. A good example of this is Reuven Snir's excellent article on the Palestinian Hakawati Theater. His article traces the development of the Theater since 1977 and ends with a discussion of the state of the Palestinian theater as of 1994, leaving the reader wanting to know more about what has happened during the important years between 1994 and today. A postscript would have been appreciated.

The book includes a combined bibliography of the references from each article. As the references are in one alphabetical list, the editor has put a code next to each entry in order to identify the topic (music,

art, cinema, dance, music, theater, or poetry) that applies to the entry. Although this is useful to quickly look up references about one topic, I found it a bit unwieldy when trying to look up the references from any particular article.

Although I had previously read several of the articles that appear in *Colors of Enchantment* in other sources, Zuhur's collection of these articles in one volume is a useful addition to the literature on the Middle East. One can only hope that Zuhur will continue her explorations of the large and rich subject of contemporary arts in the region and will follow *Colors of Enchantment* with additional volumes.

ELIZABETH COOPER

Hayati, My Life: a Novel. By Miriam Cooke. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000. Pp. 152. \$22.95. ISBN: 0815606710 (Hardcover)

In her first piece of fiction, Miriam Cooke, Professor of Arabic Literature at Duke University, moves from documenting women's accounts of the Lebanese Civil War and feminist writing to creating one of her own. This book is not, however, autobiographical in nature. Rather, using historical events such as the Intifada and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Cooke weaves a narrative around the lives of three generations of Palestinian women, who live through the British Mandate, the First Arab Revolt, the establishment of the state of Israel, the Suez War, and the Iran-Iraq War. The family is moving around the Middle East in search of work and safety, but loose track of each other from time to time because of these larger historical events.

The stories of these women is not told in a linear fashion. Rather, by jumping between place, time, and people, Cooke weaves a narrative representative of the disjointedness the characters feel as time passes for them. Certain events, such as the death of a child, war, poverty, and imprisonment, will haunt the characters, and as new events unfold, they are reminded of the past. Throughout these events, the title of the book highlights the sentiment of these women. "Hayati," literally "my life," represents the children of these characters. These families, especially the women, continue to struggle against the world around them in order to create a better life for their children.

Falling within the category of Diaspora literature, Cooke's book presents the lives of these women as representative of the types of hardships experienced in this region of the world. It is directed towards a

large audience, which is assumed to have some knowledge of the region of Palestine and its recent history.

It is a compelling work, easily accessible to most readers regardless of the depth of their knowledge of the socio-political realities of the region. It should be noted that it is not a reference work, and therefore contains no index or bibliography. It does provide a chronology of both historical events and events in the lives of the characters which help put these stories into sequence. This monograph is published in a hardcover format with high-quality paper. It will withstand use by many users, which this book deserves. It is well written and engaging, and Cooke has created for us a view of the plight of Palestinian women. All libraries which collect Diaspora literature and monographs about modern Middle Eastern Studies and Women's Studies should acquire this book.

KATHERINE NIELSEN

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

The Personalities of Mithra in Archaeology and Literature. By A. D. H. Bivar. Biennial Yarshater Lecture Series no. 1. New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 1998. Pp. 140. Bibliography and Index. \$34.00. ISBN: 0933273282 (Hardcover)

David Bivar, Professor Emeritus of Iranian Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the university of London, presents in this text four essays which he originally presented at the Yarshater Lectures in UCLA's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures in 1994. His main hypothesis, which runs through all of his essays, is "that the cult of Mithras prevalent in the Roman Empire between the first and the third centuries A.D. derived from, and in important respects resembled, a religion prevalent in ancient Iran during Indo-Iranian and pre-Achæmenid times" (p. xi). Grounded on this hypothesis, Bivar explores the literary and archæological manifestations of Mithra, looking specifically at those personality traits ascribed to Mithra, and how these changed over time and place. Bivar divides his text into four discrete essays, accompanied by three detailed appendices which explore the interaction of the Greco-Roman and Mesopotamian cultures in relation to possible influences of Mesopotamian culture on Roman Mithraism.

Building on both fundamental works on Mithraism and works that are not as generally accepted, Bivar examines literary works and artefacts from the period to develop his hypothesis, ultimately supporting with available sources. Taking into account the recent scholarly assumption that civilizations did not live in isolation from one another, Bivar systematically builds his hypothesis, using concrete examples to prove that Roman Mithraism was influenced by Indo-Iranian Mithraic traditions. Therefore, this book is not intended for a general audience, nor as an introductory text, but rather is directed toward established scholars and researchers in the field of Mithraic Studies as it suggests another possible conclusion based on available material.

With this in mind, Bivar has provided extensive references and footnotes for each essay, a select bibliography and detailed index which allows the reader to examine the original sources for themselves. For those archaeological artefacts which are held in only one location, Bivar has reproduced photographs of these artefacts for the reader to examine. Bivar uses both original and transliteration variably, based on the texts in question, rather than with consistency. This allows the reader to clearly identify when he shifts from one source to another in different cultural contexts. Made of high-quality paper and well-bound, the large font allows for easy reading. The figures, added to the end of the book, are high quality reproductions.

Academic libraries, whose universities include departments dedicated to Middle Eastern Studies, Oriental studies, Ancient History, and Roman and Mesopotamian religion, literature, and archaeology at an advanced level, should acquire this monograph. It is not introductory in nature, as it provides a new perspective on Mithraic Studies based on solid research. It can be obscure at times and assumes that the reader has already comprehended the generally accepted material available on Mithra and is aware of their conclusions. This previous knowledge will clearly facilitate the reader's comprehension. Bivar's work is detailed and comprehensive, and he successfully defends his hypothesis using literary and archaeological sources.

KATHERINE NIELSEN

McGILL UNIVERSITY

Azerbaijan: Ethnicity and the Struggle for Power in Iran. By Toraj Atabaki. Rev. ed. London: I. B. Tauris, 2000. Pp. xvi, 246; Bibliography (p. 229–240) and index. ISBN: 1-86064-554-2.

In this second edition of *Azerbaijan: Ethnicity and the Struggle for Power in Iran*, Atabaki sets out to relate the history of the territory of Iranian Azerbaijan in the twentieth century and how it has related to the central political events of Iran during that time. Atabaki is Associate Professor of Iranian and Central Studies at the University of Utrecht and a Senior Research Fellow at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam.

There is a brief introduction to the history of the Azerbaijanis and how those in Iran have connected to the Azerbaijanis of the former Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic and the former and newly-restored Republic of Azerbaijan. The introduction spells out the perspective from which the author addresses the general framework of Iranian history by looking at the role played by the province of Azerbaijan and its people, especially those self-identified as Azerbaijanis. This is followed by preliminary material on the arrival of the Turkic people in this territory of Azerbaijan who would come to be called Azerbaijanis in the twentieth century. This is a somewhat difficult task since the self-identification is of a rather late provenance. Atabaki also gives a good discussion of the terminology of nationhood that developed in the various contexts in which the Azerbaijani nation[s] came into being, in both Persian and Turkish contexts.

Atabaki explains the role of the Azerbaijanis in the major political events of the twentieth century, beginning with the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1909, through World Wars I and II, up the 1950s. He describes party politics in Azerbaijan and the movement for the autonomy of Azerbaijan that flourished briefly in 1945–1946. Always lurking behind the politics of this territory was the Soviet Union and its blend of power politics and attempts to export revolution.

This second edition contains an Epilogue that moves the story up to the 1990s, when one of the outcomes of the collapse of the Soviet Union was the re-establishment of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Atabaki outlines some of the issues linking the two Azerbaijanis in this new era of national awareness and self-identity.

The book is well-researched and very well documented, and the political movements in Azerbaijan are carefully placed in their contexts within both the Iranian and post-Soviet spheres. I did, however, want

a bit more of what had been promised in the sub-title's use of the word "ethnicity." "The struggle for power" is quite well covered, but I was hoping for a bit more data on the Azerbaijani nation, its language, its self-awareness, and some of the basic demographic percentages that are a part of this reality. I think this especially important to a national self-awareness that is relatively new. Some of this might have been covered in the early chapters that give pre-twentieth century history. This portion seemed a bit hazy — no doubt, in part, because the specific ethnic self-awareness in this case develops fairly late. It would have been useful to have said more about the way in which the Republic of Azerbaijan has used and developed history during its new period of independence and whether this "new" history is linked to Iranian Azerbaijan.

The notes and extensive bibliography make this book especially valuable, as they give an idea of the vast amount of material that is available for study and which Atabaki utilized. It is also important for English speakers who are unable to go through the data which the author has used in order to give us this concise narrative.

PAUL CREGO

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Whatever Happened to the Egyptians? Changes in Egyptian Society from the 1950 to the Present. By Amin Galal. Illustrations by Golo. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2000. Pp. 177. ISBN 9774245598. \$16.95 (paper)

What is happening to the Egyptians, as with other cultures, is a process of metamorphosis, in which all aspects of their quotidian life is being commodified and increasingly becoming "the object of a commercial transaction, including man's very soul." It is on this bleak note that Galal Amin ends his terrific little book. Amin's intellectual objective, in this book as elsewhere, is to challenge the entire conceptual framework for analyzing the economic and social development of the Arab world.

Over the last fifty years westernization and the rapid growth of the middle class have dominated socioeconomic change in the Arab world. Amin holds little hope from what he terms slogans and labels such as economic development, foreign aid, economic stabilization, structural adjustment, globalization, among others, to effectively shed any useful light on current and persisting social and economic problems. For Amin,

to attribute Egypt's economic and social crises on the Infitah policies — economic liberalization inaugurated by Anwar Sadat in 1974 — alone is unconvincing. Rather he chronicles “the high rate of social mobility” in Egypt, especially since the Nasser era. Amin argues that the upward and downward Egyptian social mobility and its rate of acceleration and deceleration over time is the undercurrent to much of the changes, and continuing travail, experienced by Egyptian society.

Galal Amin is a Professor of Economics specializing in microeconomics, economic development, history of economic thought and economics of the Middle East at the American University in Cairo since 1979. He also taught at Ain Shams University (1969–1974) and the University of California, Los Angeles (1978–1979, 1985–86). He received a PhD in economics from the London School of Economics (1964), along with a diploma in Public Law, from the Faculty of Law, Cairo University. He is the author of numerous books and articles in both Arabic and English including: *Wasf Miṣr fī Nihayāt al-Qarn al-ʿIshrīn* (Dar al-Shuruq, 2000) which won the 2000 Ministry of Culture's prize for best cultural work; *al-Muthaqqafūn al-ʿArab wa-Isrāʾīl* (Dar al-Shuruq, 1998); *Egypt's Economic Predicament* (Brill, 1995).

Amin is on the Boards of Directors of the Egyptian Economic Society, the Egyptian Society for Human Rights, and the Arab Society for Human Rights. In addition, he served on the Arab Society of Economic Research as Research Coordinator (1995–1997), and as the economic advisor for the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (1974–1978). He is also the recipient of honors and recognitions such as the award for Economics from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science in 1981, the Order of Merit for the Sciences and Arts from the President of Egypt in 1977, and the State Prize for Economics in 1976. In 1998 he won the Cairo International Book Fair Prize for the best book in Social Studies for *Mādhā Ḥadatha lil-Miṣriyyīn: Taṭawwur al-Mujtamaʿ al-Miṣrī fī Nisf Qarn, 1945–1995*.

Whatever Happened to the Egyptians? was initially translated by an unnamed friend of the author and then reworked by Amin and his wife. The book germinated in a collection of articles written for the Egyptian monthly *al-Hilāl* between 1996–1997, beginning with a piece on the status of women in Egypt, in which Amin compares the changes in, and conditions of, the way of life his mother experienced with that of his daughter. Other pieces followed on diverse topics: the relentless devaluing of the Arabic language in public and private affairs, the foolish reliance on the private car as the mode of transport, the pe-

cularity of Egyptian vacations, the formative influence of the moving picture, the change in Egyptian attitudes towards migration, and more. Amin adds two more chapters to the book in order to better frame the premise of his argument. The chapters are poignantly prefaced by — and the book cover and the title page sport caricatures — by Golo, the renowned illustrator for *The Cairo Times*. Golo's work is periodically exhibited by art galleries and is found in numerous publications. The book's style, format, and objective does not suffer from a lack of an index; however, a bibliography would have been helpful in pointing researchers to readings referred to in Amin's arguments. The book may disappoint a reader searching solely for peer reviewed economic data or elaborate economic theory. Amin rather skillfully navigates between socio-economic analysis and personal and anecdotal observation. The book's insight on development and privatization and its refreshing honesty about the rich complexity of Egyptian society makes it a delightful, and a highly recommended, read.

FADI H. DAGHER

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Daughters of the Nile: Photographs of the Egyptian Women's Movements, 1900–1960. Edited by Hind Wassef and Nadia Wassef. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2001. Pp. 160, 250 b/w photographs. \$24.50 (paper) ISBN 9774246020.

This is an important photographic chronicle of women's roles in Egyptian women's movements during the first half of the 20th century. The book contains more than a collection of some 250 black and white photographs. Similar to the multiple roles women play in movements, the collection of photographs reproduced here plays a multiple role in merging "media, disciplines, and history." Mostly the book documents — admittedly from what this reviewer projects on these photographs as a produced reality — not only Egyptian women's resistance to patriarchy, to ossified perceptions and habits, but the struggle for political, economic and social justice. In their foreword Marie Assaad, Aida Guindy, and Aziza Hussein argue that the women represented should be seen as united in their goal for Egyptian social progress and defined as "I participate, therefore I am."

The photographs were compiled from newspapers, magazine, and family albums. Arranged thematically within nine chapters, they doc-

ument the key figures in Egypt's women's struggle, new professional roles, collective political and social activity, national and local welfare mobilization, resistance to occupation and invasion, and more. The quality of the photographs varies. Nevertheless each tells a story, and combined, they chronicle a diverse history. The background information, which accompanies the photographs and it provided in both Arabic and English, could have been more detailed for the benefit of the uninitiated. Researchers interested in pursuing the subject will welcome the bibliography. There is an unsettling feeling about the book, initially reflected by the coverage period. In their introduction the editors' explanation for the 1960 cut off date, when the Nasserist regime shut down "opposition parties and organizations of a political nature" ushering in an era represented by the "gradual absence of the collective in favor of individuals subsumed under the state and its discourses," is quite unconvincing, and if true, very depressing. It is not clear how the editors define the phrase "political nature." But everything can be analyzed politically. One need only scratch the surface here. What are the editors presently doing? Both are active members of the New Woman Research Center, an Egyptian non-governmental feminist organization dedicated to the research and advocacy of women's issues. Should the reader assume that members of this organization are mere "individuals subsumed under the state and its discourses?"

Far from it; the editors are engaged in independent research and education on gender issues. Nadia Wassef earned a doctorate in 1977 from the University of Calgary, Canada for her dissertation: "The Egyptians in Montreal: A New Colour in the Canadian Ethnic Mosaic". Publications since include: *Investigating Masculinities and Female Genital Mutilation in Egypt* (National NGO Center for Population and Development, 1999), "Constructions of Gender in Middle and Secondary School Curriculum in Egypt," in *Proceeding of the Arab Regional Population Conference*, 1996, and *The School Environment in Egypt: A Situation Analysis of Public Preparatory Schools* (Population Council, 2000). For more research undertaken for the Population Council, refer to <http://www.popcouncil.org>. The sisters are also co-owners and co-managers of Diwan, an upscale bookstore in Zamalek, Cairo. The Egyptian women's movements, Egyptian feminists making history and Egyptian women's firsts and challenges continue, despite the Nasserist or any other repressive regime.

The book's last photograph, of Egyptian women marching in celebration (1956) of political rights gained, gives the false impression that an

end was reached, that there is nothing to struggle for anymore. Perhaps the placid look of the marchers is indicative of a collective realization of the awesome task of completing an unfinished project ahead. I think a better photograph with which “to end on a high note” — found on the second to last page and constituting part of the cover design — is that of an animated Shahinda Maqlad leading a demonstration calling for her husband’s murderer to be brought to justice. It is a far more effective image and a metaphor for a continuing and necessary struggle. A sequel photographic chronicle of Egyptian women’s movements or individual achievements, 1960 to the present, is awaited with great anticipation. *Hayyā yā bint al-nīl*.

FADI H. DAGHER

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Windows of Faith: Muslim Women Scholar-Activists in North America.

Edited by Gisela Webb. New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000. Pp. xxv, 295. ISBN 081562851X (cloth : alk. paper). \$39.95.

It would be impossible to miss the message of the book, *Windows of Faith: Muslim Women Scholar-Activists in North America*, that is, scholarship-activism is a formidable current in Muslim women’s studies in North America and the rest of the world, a current not to be ignored or overlooked in the overall endeavor of constructing a thorough understanding of women in Islam. This recently emerged discourse focuses on simultaneous ensuring, highlighting, and encouraging the dynamic participation of Muslim women across the variety of subject disciplines, as well as professions, in both theory building and grass-root undertaking on issues pertaining to “jurisprudence, theology, hermeneutics, women’s education, and women’s rights,” (p. xiii) for the purposes of promoting and realizing the concept of gender equality in Islam, and rectifying the image of Muslim women. To precisely understand this movement, Gisela Webb, the editor, reminds us of a pitfall in this regard, that is, the failure to differentiate this discourse from Western feminism. “The approach is a frontal challenge to a perceived chauvinism, a new patriarchy, that ‘Western’ feminists — perhaps unwittingly — did not see developing in their own ranks toward Muslim women (and other non-European women and their cultures),” obviously a perspective Muslim conservatives and neo-traditionalists are happy to utilize “to silence or dismiss their [Muslim women scholar-activists] work by labeling them

as ‘followers’ of secular Western feminism” (p. xiii). As a result, the urgent need for Muslim women’s self-identity and its theorization in Islamic context, not surprisingly, become pivotal in Muslim women’s scholarship-activism.

This book aims at combining theory and practice so as to shorten the distance between academia and public, and it does so in its four sections, which represent four major aspects in the scholar-activist activities: Qur’anic/theological foundations, law, literature and spirituality, as well as activism. A wide range of issues facing Muslim women in the world and particularly in North America are raised and analyzed, such as women’s status in Islam, their right to education, Islamic law pertaining to women, legal challenges confronting Muslim communities in North America, women’s human rights, and the debate on abortion and family planning. The articles in this bound volume not only lay theoretical ground for grass-root movements by defining Muslim women’s identity and asserting their legal and human rights by revisiting, reinterpreting, and recontextualizing classical theological and literary sources, but also further highlight the experiences of Muslim women activists for the purpose of encouraging others’ participation. For instance, in “Women’s Self-Identity in the Qur’an and Islamic Law,” upholding the importance of correctly interpreting Qur’anic verses in the issue of self-identity, Maysam J. al-Faruqi reviews verses 4:24 and 2:228 from a legal perspective and then exemplifies her effort as a call for more similar endeavors. “This call to review all unjustifiable practices in society and in the law should be maintained and pursued by a distinctly Muslim movement. It is not a ‘feminine’ movement, for it concerns Islamic laws that belong to all Muslims equally. It is not a ‘feminist’ movement either, because its basis is Islam and not gender: the injunctions of the Qur’an still take precedence over anything and everything even if, to the Western feminist, they do not provide blind equality.” (pp. 100–101)

This collection of essays is worth reading not only because it offers the female perspective on and interpretation of many problematic issues challenging modern Muslim women in North America and the rest of world alike, but also because it updates readers with Muslim women’s intellectual development and grass-root movement in the U.S. Finally, what makes this book particularly distinguished is its two useful appendixes: A. human rights in the Qur’anic perspective, and B. a partial list of organizations for Muslim women’s rights, advocacy, and higher Islamic education in the U.S. Appendix A, spelling out eleven

basic rights supported by Qur'anic verses, serves as a quick reference for whoever is interested in the human rights issues in Islam. Appendix B is a detailed directory of Muslim women's organizations, including their contact information, as well as missions and functions. In brief, this book, undoubtedly, is a resource-rich publication of the collective efforts of Muslim women scholar-activists in North America, with high hopes that the scholarship-activism will gradually expand beyond geographical, ethnic, and religious limits, and that its agenda concerning the rights of (Muslim) women will be implemented universally.

AN-CHI HOH DIANU

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

One Woman's Jihad: Nana Asma'u, Scholar and Scribe. By Beverly B. Mack and Jean Boyd. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000. Pp. 198. Bibliography, index. \$35.00 (Hardback) \$13.95 (paperback) ISBN: 0-253-33707-0 (cloth : alk. paper), 0-253-21398-3 (paper)

Nana Asma'u was the daughter of the spiritual and political leader of the Sokoto community in what is now northwest Nigeria. Sokoto was the capital of this region in which the people followed Asma'u's father in a new social order based upon orthodox Islam. Reared in an intellectual and religious environment, Asma'u became a poet, teacher, scholar of Islam, and a role model for Muslim women. The authors state that she was a legendary figure even in her own time, and one of their purposes is to bring to life a nineteenth century Muslim West African woman of renown.

This book is the result of collaboration between two scholars, working in the same region of Africa, who share an interest in the life and works of Nana Asma'u. Jean Boyd is former Principal Research Fellow of the Sokoto History Bureau and now a Research Associate of the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. She taught school in Nigeria where she "discovered" Asma'u while researching the history of the area. Beverly Mack is Assistant Professor of African and African-American Studies at the University of Kansas. She went to Nigeria on a Fulbright doctoral dissertation grant to find, record, and analyze Hausa women's praise poetry. She also heard of Nana Asma'u and found that no books had been written about her. Both scholars realized the importance of this woman in Nigerian history and Muslim

women's study. After meeting, they collaborated on collecting her works and then translating, analyzing and making them public.

One Woman's Jihad combines history, religion, literature and social life. It is the story of one woman's writings and influence, and the authors provide a rich context for her life and works. The contents include considerable background information about the community where Asma'u lived, the particular brand of Islam they practiced, poetic traditions, and women's participation in the community. Her father, the Shehu, was leader of the group and Asma'u was one of his closest advisors. The title of the book is a play on the word "Jihad". Jihad means struggle, especially against evil forces, in order to live a righteous life. Asma'u's father waged a jihad in which he and his followers sought to promote a proper Muslim way of life and the right of all to follow it. Besides participating in that jihad, Asma'u conducted her own jihad — the struggle to advance women's education, status, and influence among the Sokoto community through both her words and actions. She was devoted to Islam and to her father's goals; her faith was the foundation of her pursuit of knowledge. Asma'u's accomplishments were well known among the people in the area, even generations later. By the age of twenty-four, she was fluent in Arabic, Fulfulde, Hausa, and Tamachek and was familiar with the works her father had composed as well as the reference library he had accumulated.

The book is divided into two major parts, context chapters and an appendix which includes 13 of Asma'u's poems used as examples of content and style analysis. Chapter one provides a historical background of the area, and the genealogical background of Asma'u's family, and the jihad. The particular brand of Islam which her family followed is known as Qadiriyya Sufism, a type of orthodox Islam based on the Quran and Sunna (the proper mode of behavior). Sufism is often described as Muslim mysticism which focuses on the spiritual and shuns the material, corporeal world. Another chapter describes the Sokoto caliphate community of which Asma'u was a prominent figure. It was a nineteenth century community that modeled itself on the original Muslim community of the seventh century. Asma'u's father, an uncle, her brother, Bello, and her husband, Gidado, made up the core of public leaders with her father and later her brother as caliphs. They often sought Asma'u's opinion and she was the designated leader of women and responsible for the promotion of education among them (p. 30). Asma'u was not only a writer but a teacher as well. She advocated the Sunna to her students

and they assisted her in promoting these principles in the community. By teaching women, Asma'u knew she was teaching whole families in orthodox Sufi practices. Many of her poems encouraged righteous living, especially among the women. The equitable position of men and women is a belief of Sufism. Asma'u promoted this idea both through her writings and her own life's example.

Poetry has been a common mode of expression throughout the history of Islam. There were many scholarly women in Asma'u's clan who "focused their studies on the Arabic poetic composition that is the style of the work of God" (49). Asma'u employed various forms and styles of poetry so that her corpus of works display her extensive education and ability to converse in sophisticated techniques. One form she used is acrostic poetry in which the first letter of each line forms its own message which relates to the message of the whole work. Other techniques are end rhyme and adding lines to an existing work. She often gave admonitory verses, the *wa'azī* or warning style of Arabic poetry. The versification of a pre-existing prose work is a technique called in Arabic, *manzūmah*. Asma'u was asked by her brother, Bello, to versify his work about Sufi women which led her to continue the use this method. Most of her poems use doxologies which are opening and closing lines that invoke God's name and aid. Asma'u also wove the imagery of classical texts into her own works which enhanced the respectability of her works, putting them into the same league as the classics. The authors discuss how Asma'u used the different techniques and styles and provide sample poems for each of them in the text and the appendix. For each poem in the appendix they give title, date written, if known, the language of the original, and the source of the text. She wrote poems in Arabic, Hausa and Fulfulde, often translating them into one of the other languages for wider distribution. For a complete collection of her poems, see Boyd and Mack's monumental publication, *The Collected Works of Nana Asma'u, 1793–1864*, published in 1997 by Michigan State University Press. To learn more about Nana Asma'u's personal life, one should consult Jean Boyd's book, *The Caliph's Sister*, published in 1989 by F. Cass. They wrote this third book to explain how Asma'u used her poems to further the work of the caliphate jihad. It is a literary analysis of her works including style, content, context, beliefs and women's lives.

This book about Arabic poetry appears at a time when many works are being published on the topic. One of the early ones is A. J. Arberry's *Arabic Poetry* published in 1965 by Cambridge. Lila Abu-Lughod's

book, *Veiled Sentiments*, is a discussion of how modern Bedouin women used poetry as a vehicle for personal expression and confidential communication. These poems are a form of traditional oral poetry called *ghinnāwah* and encompass a range of formulas and themes. They relay emotional feelings. Asma'u's poems, on the other hand, were written down and deal mostly with people or events. A central theme for her was the importance of Muhammad and his teachings with the attendant encouragement toward behavior patterned after the prophet. Another recent book is *The Poetry of Arab Women: A Contemporary Anthology*, edited by Nathalie Handal and published in 2001. It makes visible the works of a great number of Arab women poets who are virtually unknown to the West and demonstrates the wide diversity of Arab women's poetry. In contrast to the poetry of contemporary women as given in these books, Mack and Boyd's book brings to light poems of a nineteenth century Muslim woman. The authors' goal was to make her visible to the modern world and to suggest that there may be other Muslim women who lived in an earlier time and who have written poetry that modern scholars are not aware of. It is evident from these works that Arab and Muslim women are a part of the tradition of using poetry for a variety of expressions.

One Woman's Jihad is a well-written and fascinating book that should be of interest to scholars and general readers alike. Those interested in history, literature, religion, Islamic studies, and women's roles should find this book a great resource. With the current interest in Islam and the Middle East, the book provides good insight into one type of Islam and its historical background in Nigeria. Academic libraries and larger public libraries should include the book in their collections. The authors provide notes for each chapter, a good index, a works cited list, and a glossary of terms. Since this is original research and analysis on their part, the authors do not use extensive references. However, the notes are helpful and the works cited lead readers to other publications which deal with regional history for that part of Nigeria, Islamic beliefs, African history, Muslim women, and poetry. This book about Nana Asma'u is a great contribution to the study of Muslim women's roles in times past and of the poetic tradition among Arabs/Muslims.

CONNIE LAMB

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
