

eagerness with which Ismail Bey Gasprinskii sought to apply to his famed journal the latest advances in typography and photographic reproduction, Gankevich usefully reminds us that it is hardly a recent development for the medium to help constitute the message. Less good is a second contribution about the visual impact of printed media. Trite and undernourished, Fuad Pepinov's essay on 'The Role of Political Caricature in the Cultural Development'—*sic*, as before—'of the Meskhetian (Ahiska) Turks' (pp. 159–63) attempts to relate the continued survival of the Meskhetian Turks through the events of 1944 and 1989 to a handful of cartoons in the early twentieth-century Molla Nasreddin (*Mullā Naşr al-Dīn*) journal: the precise relationship between caricature and national resilience remains vague, and Pepinov's argument is little helped by the fact that the two caricaturists to whom he accords attention were not Meskhetian Turks at all, but Germans.

Excellent then in parts, the present volume attests to the excellence of much scholarship in a field, or series of adjoining fields, about which many readers will know all too little. Faced with a daunting undertaking, the editors have produced an invaluable primer with which to illustrate the state of the art, or states of the arts: both heartening and salutary, it deserves as wide a readership as possible.

Thomas Welsford

Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle/All Souls College, Oxford

E-mail: thomas.welsford@all-souls.ox.ac.uk

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Arab Painting: Text and Image in Illustrated Arabic Manuscripts

Edited by ANNA CONTADINA (Leiden: Brill, 2007), xii, 288 pp. Price HB \$142.00. EAN 978–9004157224.

This book follows from the international conference on Arabic illustrated manuscripts held at the School of Oriental and African Studies on 17/18 September 2004. It comprises contributions from the following scholars in this field: Persis Berlekamp, Charles Burnett, Moya Carey, Anna Contadini, Oleg Grabar, Robert Hillenbrand, Jaclynne Kerner, Geoffrey King, Remke Kruk, Bernard O'Kane, Cynthia Robinson, Michael Rogers, and Emilie Savage-Smith. As outlined by Anna Contadini in her introduction, the principal aim of the book is to consider the dynamics of the relationship between text and image in Arabic illustrated manuscripts ranging geographically from Spain to western Iran, and chronologically from the tenth to sixteenth centuries. In accordance with the broad scope of the book, it has been divided into four thematic sections: theoretical issues, scientific manuscripts, literary manuscripts, and the European connection.

The first section begins with Anna Contadini's article which emphasizes the importance of considering Arabic illustrated manuscripts as whole objects, in which the text and illustrations act as complex and complementary parallels to

one another, existing in unison to achieve an overall shared functional objective. This approach, she argues, provides not only a corrective against the potential for anachronistic or ethnocentric bias in scholarship but also a necessary theoretical framework in which the specific political, cultural, and intellectual milieu of each manuscript is prioritized in the process of attempting to understand its artistic content. Oleg Grabar's article is also in this first, theory-based section and in many ways concurs with the conclusions of the first article. Grabar, however, takes a more etymological and semantic route and discusses the problems associated with the term 'Arab painting' itself. Looking at the art-historiographical evolution of the term and focusing on the writings of Prisse d'Avesnes, Stanley Lane-Pool, and Albert Gayet, he also emphasizes how commercial and political fluctuations in the mediaeval Islamic world make the term very open to debate, particularly in the light of the limited and often contradictory evidence of geographical origin which the surviving Arabic illustrated manuscripts present.

Jaclynne Kerner begins the second section, on scientific manuscripts, by discussing two illustrated manuscripts of a treatise on antidotes based on the work of the ancient Greek physician Galen, *Kitāb al-diryāq*, from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Kerner argues that, in order to understand the illustrations of these manuscripts and their function, we must first look at the nature of the text: clearly scientific but one which borrows significantly in style and structure from the apparently unrelated genre of the Arabic biographical dictionary. The flowering of the genre of the biographical dictionary was concurrent with that of the illustrated manuscript in the central Islamic lands in the mediaeval period, and Kerner argues that the two should not be seen as products of the same process of expansion of intellectual and cultural activity, particularly in the Jazīra in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In this way, she argues, we can see the illustrations of the *Kitāb al-diryāq* manuscripts as being functions of luxury and, therefore, of socio-economic status, rather than possessing an explanatory function in relation to the text; in fact, Kerner argues that the text would have been very well known to its readers who would, therefore, have had little need for explanatory visual aids in the form of illustrations. Likewise, Michael Rogers in his article on Arabic illustrated manuscripts of the *De Materia Medica* of Dioscorides makes the point that the mediaeval readership of these manuscripts would be very familiar with the text, thus rendering illustrations somewhat superfluous in any context other than aesthetic pleasure or the specific requirements of the artist or patron at the time of production.

Similar conclusions are made by Remke Kruk, in her article on Arabic illustrated bestiaries, who chooses the exception to prove the rule by taking a text of which no surviving illustrated manuscripts exist: Ibn Abī l-Ḥawāfir's *Badā'ī al-akwān fī manāfi' al-ḥayawān*. She asks a simple but important question: why are there no surviving examples of illustrated manuscripts of this bestiary text (she takes an early fourteenth-century manuscript as her focus) when there are illustrated manuscripts from this period of other Arabic bestiary texts, such as Ibn Bakhtīshū's *K. Manāfi' al-ḥayawān*? Dovetailing with the preceding two articles, Kruk concludes that the purely aesthetic function of illustrations was

seemingly paramount in the illustrated Arabic bestiary manuscripts of this period and the potential of Ibn Abī l-Hawāfir's text to deliver stimulating and pleasing images was diminished by the fact that, unlike the text of Ibn Bakhtīshū', there was no attention paid to fantastical or exotic animals. Similarly, the highly scientific and source-based nature of Ibn Abī l-Hawāfir's text rendered the presence of any accompanying images superfluous for the reader; clearly to the point of exclusion. In partial concurrence and partial contrast with such conclusions, Moya Carey's article on a late thirteenth-century manuscript of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Umar al-Šūfi's constellation guide, *K. Šuwar al-kawākib al-thābita*, shows that illustrations in an Arabic manuscript produced in the eastern Islamic world (probably Marāgha) can display a combination of highly accurate technical information and sophisticated artistic designs simultaneously within the same image: explanatory and aesthetic function are merged harmoniously.

In the final article of this section, Persis Berlekamp takes a fourteenth-century illustrated manuscript of Zakariyā b. Muhammad al-Qazwīnī's *'Ajā'ib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharā'ib al-mawjūdāt*, probably produced in the southern Iranian province of Fārs, to examine the relationship between intellectual and artistic culture in the unusually fluid and turbulent period after the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in 1258. She argues that the interconnection between the scholar-bureaucrat classes of Wāsiṭ (Qazwīnī's centre of activity) and Fārs, which existed already as a consequence of the spread of Ibn Sīnā's neoplatonic ideas, would have been greatly enhanced by the geographical contiguity of Il-Khanid rule and that the interconnection of the artistic cultures of Iraq and Fārs would, therefore, have been enhanced accordingly, evidence of such artistic interconnection being present in the illustrations of the manuscript under discussion.

The assimilation and synthesis of diverse intellectual and artistic cultures in Arabic illustrated manuscripts is also considered in the articles of the third section, on literary manuscripts. In the first article, Geoffrey King asks why a particular type of stepped grave that is depicted in the illustrations of a ninth/tenth-century secular manuscript (probably Egyptian) and several thirteenth-century *Maqāmāt* manuscripts (probably Iraqi) may also be found in a Jewish graveyard in Šuhār, on the coast of the Sultanate of Oman. Trade and pilgrimage, he argues, resulted in a fluidity of shared grave types and, in general, an interlinking of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic cultures in this area of the Middle East. Cynthia Robinson also discusses cultural fluidity in her article on an illustrated manuscript of *Ḥadīth bayāḍ wa-riyāḍ*, probably produced in al-Andalus in the early thirteenth century. Robinson argues that although the illustrations of this manuscript fit the broad stylistic pattern of illustrated manuscripts from the central Islamic lands, such as the *Maqāmāt* manuscripts produced in the thirteenth century, they diverge from them completely in their dominant subject matter: the trials and vicissitudes of courtly love; a theme frequently found in the illustrated manuscripts of European romances in this period. By contrast, this subject matter is never to be found in the illustrated *Maqāmāt* manuscripts, but Robinson argues that the illustrations of the *Ḥadīth bayāḍ wa-riyāḍ* manuscript represent a combination of tradition and localized innovation that is entirely consistent with both the text itself and, in general, with

the literary courtly culture of al-Andalus during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in which *ghazal* and *khamriyya* were integrated with the *roman idyllique* propagated in the Castilian court by Provençal troubadours. Similarly, Robert Hillenbrand in his article on an unusual double frontispiece illustration of an early thirteenth-century *Maqāmāt* manuscript argues that within the same illustration traditional Middle Eastern royal iconography can be found skilfully harmonized with the design traits of the Byzantine consular diptych and author portrait along with the ornamental patterns of Crusader art.

In the final article of this section, Bernard O’Kane takes a technical look at the textual captions that accompany some of the illustrations of thirteenth and fourteenth-century *Maqāmāt* and *Kalīla wa-Dimna* manuscripts, arguing that they may well have acted as summaries for the less than fully literate, as well as having the more obvious role as guides for calligraphers and painters involved in the production of the manuscripts. The technical processes involved in the illustration of texts are also examined in the two articles which make up the final section, on the European connection. In the first article, Emilie Savage-Smith argues that the geometric depictions of human anatomy found in the illustrations of medieval Arabic medical encyclopedia may also be seen in the illustrations of medical manuscripts from as far afield as twelfth and thirteenth-century Europe (in particular Bavaria, England, and Provence) and fifteenth-century Iran. In the final article of the book, Charles Burnett examines the ways in which mediaeval European translators of Arabic texts on divination and astrology copied the illustrations that they encountered amid the texts that they were translating. Burnett particularly focuses on the twelfth-century scribe Hugo Santalla of Tarazona who translated Arabic texts that were held in the library of the Banū Hūd, the former kings of Islamic Zaragoza.

William Stockland

University of Oxford

E-mail: william.stockland@wolfson.ox.ac.uk

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Saint Francis and the Sultan. The Curious History of a Christian-Muslim Encounter

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While refuting the Qur’ān was one of the main aims of Christian apologists in previous centuries, conversion of Muslims was also important to them. In September 1219, for example, as the armies of the Fifth Crusade besieged Damietta in Egypt, Francis of Assisi (1182–1226), who must have witnessed its capture and plunder on 5 November, travelled there with thirteen companions to preach to Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil, a nephew of Saladin. He did not manage to convert al-Kāmil in the course of his short encounter with him. However, the