

Arabic Belles Lettres



Edited by Joseph E. Lowry
and Shawkat M. Toorawa

Resources in Arabic and Islamic Studies

ARABIC BELLES LETTRES

RESOURCES IN ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

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Cover image: Al-Ḥārith attending the banquet at the chief of the beggars. Maqāmah 30. From *Al-Maqāmāt* (Settings or Sessions); author: Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Uthmān al-Ḥarīrī, Iraq, ca. 1240. (Courtesy Bibliothèque National de France, Ms. ARABE 3929, Folio 120; via Art Resource.)

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*For Everett
on His Seventieth Birthday
and on the Occasion of His Retirement*



كلّ شيء إذا كثر رخص
إلاّ الأدب

Abū 'Āmir al-Faḍl ibn Ismā'īl al-Jurjānī (fl. mid-11th c. CE), describing his cat (khafif meter):

دُونَ وَلَذَانِ مَنْزِلِي بِالرَّفْقُونِ	إِنَّ لِي هِرَّةً خَضَبْتُ سَوَاهَا
وَدَعَاتٍ تَرُدُّ شَرَّ الْعُيُونِ	ثُمَّ قَلَدْتُهَا لِحَوْفِي عَلَيْهَا
بِزُلَالٍ صَافٍ وَلَحْمٍ سَمِيمٍ	كُلَّ يَوْمٍ أَعُولُهَا قَبْلَ أَهْلِي
عَاطِسَ الْوَجْهِ وَارِمَ الْعَرِينِ	وَهِيَ تَلْعَابُهُ إِذَا مَا رَأْتَنِي
وَتُلْهِي بِكُلِّ مَا يُلْهِينِي 5	فَتُعْنِي طَوْرًا وَتَرْقُصُ طَوْرًا
عِنْدَ بَرْدِ الشِّتَاءِ فِي كَانُونِ	لَا أُرِيدُ الصَّلَاءَ إِنْ ضَاجَعْتَنِي
بِلِسَانِ كَالْمَرْبِدِ الْمَسْنُونِ	وَإِذَا مَا حَكَّكْتُهَا لَحَسْتَنِي
بِأَنْبِيٍّ مِنْ صَوْتِهَا وَرَيْنِ	وَإِذَا مَا جَفَوْتُهَا أَسْتَعْطَفْتَنِي
عَنْ جِرَابٍ لَيْسَتْ مَتَاعَ الْعُيُونِ	وَإِذَا مَا وَتَرْتُهَا كَشَفْتُ لِي
10 رِ قَتْلُفِيهِ فِي الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِينِ	أُمْلِحُ الْخَلْقِ حِينَ تَلْعَبُ بِالْفَأْ
بِشِمَالٍ مَكْرُوبَةٍ أَوْ يَمِينِ	وَإِذَا مَاتَ حِسُّهُ أَنْشَرْتُهُ
مَ أَنْجَارًا عَلْتُهُ كَالشَّهِينِ	وَتُصَادِيهِ بِالْعُقُولِ فَإِنْ رَا
عَاجَلْتُهُ بِبَطْشَةٍ لِلتَّيْنِ	وَإِذَا مَا رَجَا السَّلَامَةَ مِنْهَا
ءَ وَتَعْتَأَلُهُ بِقَطْعِ الْوَتِينِ	وَكَذَلِكَ الْأَقْدَارُ تَقْتَرِسُ الْمَرَّ
15 إِذْ سَقَاهُ سَاقِي بِنَاسِ الْمُنُونِ	بَيْنَمَا كَانَ فِي تَشَاطُرٍ وَأَنْسِ

I HAVE A CAT whose foot-pads I dye with henna
before I put henna on my own newborns.
Then I tie cowrie shells to her collar
to repel the harm of evil eyes.
Each day, before I feed my family, I see that she gets
our choicest meats and purest waters.
The playful thing! When she sees
my face contorted in a frown,
sometimes she sings, sometimes she dances,
sparing no exertion for my diversion's sake.
I care nothing for the fire's warmth when she lies with me
in the chill of winter's longest nights.
When I give her scratches, she gives me licks
with a tongue toothed like the surface of a file.
If I avoid her, she fawns on me,
wheedling with her little high-pitched moans.
If I give her trouble she will show me her claws,
a sight that gives the eyes no pleasure.
When she plays with a mouse, she is at her saltiest
for she puts him through humiliating punishment.
When he faints from terror, she busies herself
in batting him awake with a left and a right.
She teases him with feigned inattention, then
swoops like a falcon when he tries to creep away.
Just when he dares hope for peace from her,
those hopes are dashed with a serpent's violence.
In this way do the decrees of fate ruin a man
and finish him with a cut to the aorta,
just when, amid the lively gathering,
he takes the cup of destiny from a server.

Translated by David Larsen

Contents

Editors' Preface	ix
Abbreviations	x
<i>Early Narratives</i>	
Reading the Qur'an as a Law Book: Legislation, Language, and Allusion in Islam's Scripture (Joseph E. Lowry)	3
Matrilineal Lineages as a Signifier of Social Links in the Context of Badr and Uḥud (Abed el-Rahman Tayyara)	19
Rhapsody, Revelation, and the Coming Out of the Beloved: <i>Majnūn Laylā</i> and the 'Udhri Romances (Ruqayya Y. Khan)	39
The Rational, Irrational, and Recognition: <i>Firāsah</i> , Detection, and the Uncanny Atavism of Kinship in Some Medieval Arabic Narratives (Philip F. Kennedy)	55
<i>Medieval Authors</i>	
'Ubayd Allāh Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Abī Ṭāhir and His (Continuation of His Father's) History of Baghdād (Shawkat M. Toorawa)	73
Ibn Fāris and the Origins of the <i>Maqāmah</i> Revisited (Maurice A. Pomerantz and Bilal W. Orfali)	95
The Philosopher as Littérateur: Al-Tawḥīdī and His Predecessors (Everett K. Rowson)	115
Championing the Era: Approaching Al-Khafājī's <i>Rayḥānat Al-Alibbā'</i> (Ghayde Ghraawi)	147

Modern Egypt

Cairene Newspapers and Cultural Controversy: A Case from 1902 (<i>Roger Allen</i>)	167
“We’re the Ones Who Made the Ants Stand in Line”: Preposterous Boasts and the Ideology of Ingenuity in Egyptian Arabic (<i>Devin J. Stewart</i>)	175
Principal Works of Everett K. Rowson, 1979–2018	199
Contributors	202
Index	203

Editors' Preface

In 2017, we presented a Festschrift volume to our Doktorvater, Everett Rowson. *Arabic Humanities, Islamic Thought*, handsomely produced by Brill, included twenty-five contributions by colleagues and current and former students. As we ourselves were unable to contribute at the time, we resolved to produce a modest follow-up volume. Like its predecessor, this volume features colleagues and former students, ranges widely in recognition of Everett's broad interests and scholarship, and includes a bibliography of that scholarship. We have organized the ten articles into three heuristic rubrics—early narratives, medieval authors, and modern Egypt—and, in a slight departure from convention, included among them one of Everett's own articles, a much-cited 1996 piece on al-Tawḥīdī and his predecessors.

We are grateful to the Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften in Frankfurt for permission to reprint the Tawḥīdī piece; to Daniel Kaylor for preparing it for this volume; to Rebekah Zwanzig for preparing the index; and to the following for their input: Sean Anthony, Kristen Brustad, Elizabeth Holt, Matthew Keegan, James Montgomery, and Dwight Reynolds. Our thanks go also to our dear friends on the RAIS team: designer Susanne Wilhelm, publisher Billie Jean Collins, and marketer and distributor Ian Stevens.

Joseph E. Lowry
Shawkat M. Toorawa

ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Gregorian (Christian) year
AH	Hijrah (Muslim) year
c.	century
ca.	<i>circa</i> , about, approximately
cf.	<i>confer</i> , compare
ch., chs.	chapter, chapters
d.	died
DEA	E. Badawi and M. Hinds, <i>A Dictionary of Egyptian Arabic</i> (Beirut, 1986)
ed.	editor, edition, edited by
EI1	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 1st edition
EI2	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 2nd edition
EI3	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three</i> , 3rd edition
EQ	<i>Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān</i> , 1st edition
esp.	especially
ff.	and following
fl.	<i>floruit</i> , flourished
fol.	folio, folios
GAL	C. Brockelmann, <i>Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur</i> (Leiden, 1949)
GAS	F. Sezgin, <i>Geschichte des arabischen schrifttums</i> (Leiden, 1982)
lit.	literally
KA	<i>Kitāb al-Aghāni</i> (1992)
MS	manuscript
n., nn.	note, notes
n.d.	no date
n.p.	no place
Q	Qurʾan
r.	ruled
rev.	revised
sc.	<i>scilicet</i> , to wit
trans.	translated by
v., vv.	verse, verses
vol., vols.	volume(s)