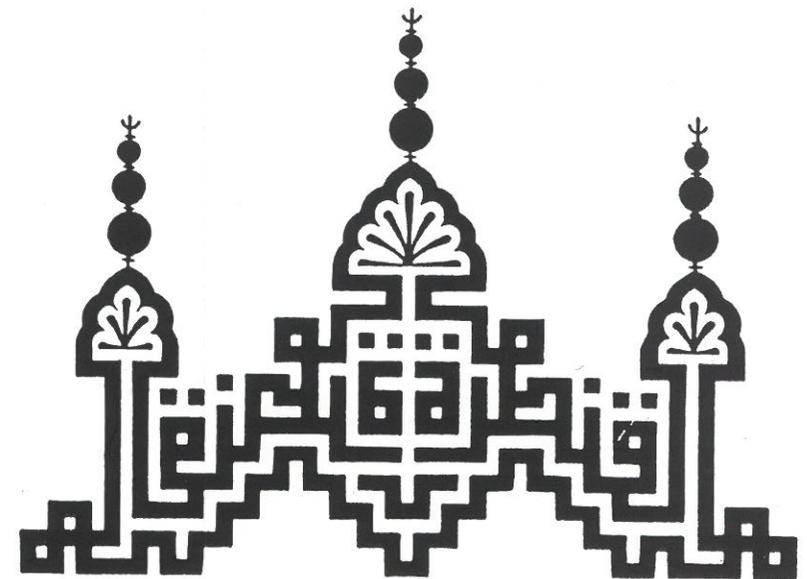


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forts on mediaeval Arab culinary art in the 1930s and '40s. General interest with the «structures of daily life» reached also Arab and Islamic studies and the 1980s witnessed a still continuing upsurge in matters of food, cooking and recipes. The subject of food is definitely staking its claim within the broader field of Arab and Islamic studies. More especially 1994 was an auspicious year. Two collective studies were published: *La alimentación en las culturas islámicas* (edited by Manuela Marín and David Waines; Madrid), based on a conference held in Xàtiva in November 1991, and *Culinary cultures of the Middle East* (edited by Sami Zubaida and Richard Tapper; London and New York), based on a conference held in London in April 1992. The «Introduction» to *La alimentación* by the editors deserves special mention as it is a state-of-the-art article summarizing what has been accomplished in the field by Arab as well as Western scholars. The text-edition now presented here is a worthy and most welcome addition to the growing bulk of source-literature on Arab/Islamic culinary art and kitchen now available. The editors of the text, Manuela Marín from the CSIC in Madrid and David Waines from Lancaster University, are both well known for their earlier contributions to promote our knowledge of these matters.

When the editors started their work they thought they were editing a *unicum* manuscript from the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (88 folios) with some six chapters missing from the beginning and a number of folios lacking at the end, with no title and nothing about the author. An anonymous manuscript in the Cambridge University Library (175 folios) entitled *Kanz al-fawā'id fi tan-wī' al-mawā'id* proved to be a complete version of the partial Dublin work. Now, with knowledge of the title, several other manuscripts turned up, among them the one, and also complete, of Dār al-Kutub al-Waṭāniya in Cairo (149 folios). Of the two complete manuscripts available, Cambridge and Cairo, the editors chose Cambridge as the basic text. The main reasons were that the Cambridge manuscript was of greater length and had fewer textual errors made by the copyist; moreover the Cambridge text was copied from the defective Dublin manuscript. The more than 800 recipes are divided into 23 chapters ranging from the requirements for a skilled cook to perfumes and scents.

Is it then possible to place *Kanz* in the mediaeval Arab/Islamic culinary tradition when the title is known but not the compiler/author neither the place nor date of writing? The editors' Introduction most convincingly places the *Kanz*'s «origin» in Egypt some time during Mamluk rule. The present reviewer placed the word origin within inverted commas to stress the fact that recipes collected in works like the *Kanz* where culled from specialized monographs from different regions and epochs. Only two sources are mentioned in *Kanz*: 'Alī ibn Rabban (d. 861 A. D.) from Sāmarrā' with his famous medical work *Firdaus al-ḥikma* (on f. 153r) and Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Baladī (f. 153 v) about whom, according to the editors, nothing is known. My friend Dr. Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila made me aware of the tenth century poet from Mosul, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Khabbāz al-Baladī as a possible source for this particular recipe. As the editors write, none of this information is of assistance in locating the work in time or place but, surely, one of the works culled must have been a tenth (?) century cookery manual of 'Abbāsīd *haute cuisine*. Mediae-

val Arab/Islamic cookbooks warrant Theodore Zeldin's dictum in his *An intimate history of humanity* (1994) that «[a]ll culinary progress has been dependent on the assimilation of foreign foods and condiments, which are transformed in the process» (p. 95).

The editors' surmise for the Egyptian provenance of the work is, nevertheless, more than just an educated guess. There is a recipe where the weight is converted from Syrian *mudd* to Egyptian *raṭl*, as though for use in Egypt; certain fish dishes where the main ingredient is some species of fish found only in the Nile; and the preparation for a dish called *jājiq*, only mentioned in the fourteenth century Egyptian *Kitāb al-ḥarb al-ma'shūq*.

Kanz displays evident similarities with cookbooks from the thirteenth century like Ḥasan al-Baghdādī's work written in Baghdad in 623/1226, the work entitled *al-Wuṣṣā ilā al-ḥābiḥ fi waṣf al-tayyibāt wal-ṭīb* whose author remains uncertain although it is attributed to Ibn al-'Adīm (d. 660/1262), and the strongest parallel of all, the anonymous work entitled *Waṣf al-aṭ'ima al-mu'tāda*. What is special in the *Kanz* compared to the cookbooks mentioned is the greater concern for health matters. As the editors have maintained elsewhere, texts on dietetics and culinary works should be read in close conjunction because together they formed a medico-culinary tradition of which *Kanz* is a veritable treasury.

The Arabic text is beautifully printed, errors few and far between. The index has suffered somewhat more from odd diacritics, misplaced sukūns and taḥdīds and wrong vowels. Some should be rectified, eg. on p. 29 read *khawlan-jān* (Ar. text & translit.), on p. 38 read *ṭahīniya* (Ar. text), on p. 42 read *qāwūt* (Ar. text), on p. 43 read *kābulī* (Ar. text), on p. 45 read *kam'a* (Ar. text & translit.), on p. 50 read *muba'ṭhara* (translit.). The index is otherwise a model of its kind giving dishes, ingredients, and utensils.

The editors should be warmly complimented for their painstaking edition of this collection of recipes which has enriched our understanding of Arab/Islamic cooking still further.

KAJ ÖHRNBERG

LÜLING, GÜNTER: *Über den Urkoran. Ansätze zur Rekonstruktion der vorislamischen-christlichen Strophenlieder im Koran*. Erlangen: Verlagsbuchhandlung H. Lüling, 1993². XVI + 564 pp.

In 1906 an epoch marking work appeared in Germany on the life of Christ, entitled *Von Remarus zu Wrede*. It was written by a young scholar, Albert Schweitzer, who was virtually until then unknown, and it was translated in 1910 into English by Montgomery under the title *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Schweitzer's book was a brilliant survey of the various versions of the «Lives of Christ», which had been produced by various schools of theological thought in Europe, ranging from pious, orthodox, uncritical ones, «to the wildest excess of eschatological and even mythical interpretation. His aim was to

survey the various attempts that had been made to interpret the life of our Lord, and, if one may use the phrase, (to) make an actuarial investigation of the position of scholarship on this question, and assess the value of years of patient, critical research that had been devoted to its problems. Quite recently it was suggested that the time was ripe for a similar survey on the life of the Arabian Prophet, (so) that we may take stock of the work that has been done», gather together the results that have been gained, and note trends of critical scholarship, indicating the lines of investigation that will have to be followed in future. But, «we may have long to wait for» the emergence of a «scholar with the genius and the scholarly preparation of a Schweitzer, to undertake this task»⁵. A publication by Günter Lüling, first published in 1973, *On the Original Koran, Approaches towards reconstructing Pre-Islamic-Christian verses in the Koran* seems to directly follow this suggestion made by A. Jeffrey as early as 1926, even if it does not refer expressly to this article.

The book to be reviewed is the corrected second edition of Günter Lüling's study *Über den Urkoran*. The main text [pp. 1-542], though, remains identical; only some extracts from a number of –positive– comments made by renowned scholars since the publication of the first edition have been added between the first and second preface. Unfortunately, the second edition is a mere typescript. For financial reasons, the author had to forego setting the type by means of computer; nevertheless, nowadays this common practice would no doubt have been helpful for a book like this, dealing with such an intricate subject.

Lüling's study is of interest to both historians dealing with Christianity and Islam experts. This work extends our knowledge of pre –and early Islamic Arab culture to quite a remarkable degree. It is interesting, inventive and witty in its scientific approach. It is –at least among German scholars– a controversial issue.

Based on liberal theological positions adopted by the theologian, Albert Schweitzer (d. 1965), and his student Martin Werner (d. 1964) –whom, due to their research on early Christianity, regarded, above all, the doctrine of Trinity not being originally Christian but as «a later Hellenistic and an Imperial Roman falsification of Jesus' self-understanding»– Lüling pursues two goals in his study: first, he tries to prove that the non-Trinitarian, early Christian understanding of Jesus [as believed by the Monophysites of the Syrian Church], historically postulated by Schweitzer and Werner, is confirmed by a scientific study of the Koran. Secondly, he intends to furnish «irrefutable proof of an inconceivably comprehensive falsification of the Koran and the history of the emergence of Islam caused by Islamic Orthodoxy and developed during the first two centuries of Islam's existence». This orthodoxy, if one goes along with the opinion uttered in an earlier publication by the author⁶, «basically produced a new interpretation» of the historic character of Muḥammad (p. IX). Of course, an approach of this nature gives rise to controversy, and it should be

⁵ Arthur Jeffrey: «The Quest of the Historical Mohammed», *The Moslem World* XVI (1926), p. 327 (-348).

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noted, that this study has so far met with a limited scientific response. Nevertheless, the reviewer wants to draw attention, primarily, to the increase in knowledge that may result from Lüling's work in the religious-historical field.

The subject of this study is, as the author calls it, the «original Koran» (*Urkoran*), i.e. in accordance with his understanding, the text in its root form containing only the basic graphs (*rusūm*) without dots and diacritica; it does not focus primarily, and this is important, on its «traditional contents». So, the author thematically goes back to the period of early Islamic history that preceded the creation of the dotted and vocalised *textus receptus* of the Koran and eventually led to its formation.

The historical events affecting the establishment of this binding and obliging form of the Koran are not yet fully known, since the information handed down by Islamic history is often fragmentary or contradictory. What is certain is that the establishment of the Koran as a scripture⁷ and (in connection with it) the creation of a binding *textus receptus* in terms of the stock of texts, of their arrangement and vocalisation, took place at different stages. In this context one should remember that the first attempts to put the Koran into written form were during the reign of Caliph Abū Bakr who made a real effort to save the knowledge of the revelation of the Prophet Muḥammad after his death, which was, until then, only partly written down. One should also recall the well-known edition of the Koran under Caliph 'Uthmān and the later introduction of diacritica and vowels (only used after circa 700). It is generally accepted that in the process of writing down the Koran as well as in accordance with the various accepted reading modes and the fixation of vowels in a written form –there were quite a number of text variation possibilities. In another thematic context, only recently this fact was referred to in a comparison of 'Uthmān's edition of the (written) Koran with a version by 'Abdallāh ibn Mas'ūd⁸.

Lüling postulates at the beginning of his book [in a quite positivist manner, not considering the religious aspects involved] that by leaving out diacritica and vowel symbols, an analysis of the «basic or original text» partially produces a very different interpretation compared with the dotted and vocalised *textus receptus*. However, this «original text» is noteworthy for having «conclusive content, being classifiable in terms of literary history and being an extremely ordinary text both grammatically and lexically speaking». This suddenly combines the «previously regarded, incoherent fragments of text into a meaningful, skilfully composed entity» [see p. 2].

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d) Last but not least: what is called by Lüling the «original Koran» (*Urkoran*), very probably never existed (one should consider the above-mentioned setting of the Koran text before it was finally edited), as, among other things, the mere existence of various «versions» of the Koranic texts make clear to us¹⁰. In so far, it may be misleading for the reader, if the author entitles his book in the way he has done so. What Lüling –admittedly in quite an astute manner– has undertaken is, in fact, an investigation of common religious and literary topoi, not of a «*Urkoran*».

The reviewer, even after reading Lüling's book, is unable to follow the central conclusions, presented by the author as pieces of evidence for his hypotheses, or to comprehend his reasoning, given the fact that the author does not seem to have taken notice of a number of quite essential common insights concerning the development of the religions in the Ancient and Medieval Middle East.

An interested reader may decide to what extent the results of this quite sophisticated work may convince or evoke contradiction. Everybody familiar with the subject will know that some of G. Lüling's scientific results (or statements), which the author has gained by adopting an unorthodox method of determining them, are not unproblematic and have to be discussed to a larger extent than is possible in the framework given here. But it is worth recognising the fact that studies on religious history always involve considering the religious sensitiveness of those people who regard the Holy Scripture as unimpeachable as the written word of God, if Lüling wants to have his book considered [according to a basic Protestant evidence, cf. *Confessio Augustana* VII¹¹] as a contribution to the –currently very appropriate– reformation and refreshing of the ecumenicity of Christianity and Islam.

SEBASTIAN GÜNTHER

PETRY, CARL F., *Protectors or Praetorians? The Last Mamlūk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power*, SUNY, Albany, 1994, pp. xv + 280.

Contemporary depictions of the last phase of Mamluk rule in Egypt are dotted with epithets such as tyrannical, bloodthirsty, oppressive, stagnant or

¹⁰ It may be valuable to consult again a publication of Rudi Paret: *Grenzen der Koranforschung*. Stuttgart 1950 [= Bonner Orientalistische Studien, Heft 27], 3, pp., where he says: «Es gilt, aus dem Wortlaut des Koran soviel als irgend möglich über die innere und äußere Entwicklungsgeschichte des arabischen Propheten herauszulesen. Voraussetzung dazu ist aber, daß die einzelnen Aussprüche, die ihrerseits in «Versen» aneinandergereiht und zu Kapiteln oder «Suren» von ungleicher Länge zusammengefaßt sind, richtig verstanden und gedeutet werden, d.h. in dem Sinn, den Hohammed ihnen beigelegt haben mag, als er sie seinerzeit der Öffentlichkeit mitteilte. Und hier setzt nun die große Schwierigkeit ein (outstandings according to Paret).

¹¹ Cf. Jürgen Lorz (Ed.): *Das Augsburgische Bekenntnis*. Studienausgabe. Göttingen, 1980, p. 23.

impervious to change. The chroniclers who grapple with the political quagmire which characterized the reigns of the last two sultans of the dynasty, Qāytbāy and Wānšūh al-Ghawrī (1468-1516) –although the latter's successor, Tūmānbāy, precariously managed to remain in power for a few months before the Ottoman conquest of Cairo in 1517, his ephemeral tenure hardly warrants mention in this story–, appear unanimous in their judgement of this period: an autocratic military regime ridden by intrigue and dogged by menaces both from their own ranks and from centrifugal forces on the periphery of the empire or hostile foreign polities; a static bureaucracy staffed by cronies or henchmen of the incumbent ruler and solely devoted to the preservation and, whenever possible, the advancement of its privileged status through deceit and skulduggery; a populace encumbered with onerous fiscal duties, squeezed for their monies by a callous soldiery and subjugated to the whims of a profligate and ruthless ruling hierarchy. The dismal accounts of contemporary commentators have percolated through modern assessments of the period and are now firmly embedded in late Mamluk historiography. C. Petry does not set out to rebut the prevalent perceptions of Egyptian history in the transition between the decline of the Mamluk sultanate and the rise of the Ottoman empire as a world power. Indeed, he subscribes to most of the views expressed on the topic by previous historians and coincides with them in imputing the downfall of the Mamluk regime to its inherent factional shortcomings, among which its obduracy and advocacy of formerly advantageous fiscal and military policies, rendered obsolete by a rapidly-mutating landscape in both international diplomacy and commercial trends. His aim is, on the contrary, to qualify and nuance some of those perceptions in the light of a more comprehensive and critical reading of the sources available for the period. He strives to «vindicate» the performance of Qāytbāy and al-Ghawrī and shake off some of the misconceptions which have hitherto blurred, if not altogether distorted, our valuation of both their reigns. He tries to convince us, successfully, as far as I am concerned, that their behaviour, far from responding to wanton and indiscriminate impulses, was probably dictated by exigency, was endowed with a certain inner rationale (despite the obfuscation that such a claim is bound to generate among those who still cling to the illusory notion that Mamluk policies were overwhelmingly the result of expediency and, therefore, perfunctory) and, to a great extent, conditioned by inauspicious circumstances in both the international and domestic spheres. In sum, both Qāytbāy and al-Ghawrī strove to make the best out of their mandates with the only weapons they knew, those «sanctified» by more than two centuries of hegemonic rule (appeasement in foreign policy as a means of preserving the status quo; strengthening of the ties of clientele which bound local notables to their Turkish patrons; cossetting of those factions from among Mamluk troops which shored up the incumbent monarch either out of adherence to bonds of solidarity forged during common training as recruits [*khushdāshiyya*] or, more likely, out of hankering for pecuniary rewards). Conscious that modern appraisals of their endeavours cast lingering doubts on their policies' effectiveness, C. Petry insists on the need of re-evaluating unsubstantiated or insufficiently corroborated incriminations and warns against the haste with which some of his colleagues have in the past tagged both sultans as «dis-