

I do not think that it could make sense to speak about the present Czech linguistic situation as post-diglossic as one of the Bohemists did.

Ernst Håkon Jahr has discussed the question ‘High and low in Norwegian? Dialect and standard in spoken Norwegian – a historical account of competition and language status planning’ (pp. 197-208). He has emphasized that Norway is very dialect-tolerant and “the reason for this is Parliament’s firm policy of promoting the use of ‘low’ dialects in the schools, and thus blocking the establishment of a ‘high’ variety of Norwegian which could assume dominance in schools and in society at large” (p. 207). This is a very interesting and rather rare if not unique language policy indeed. It is clear that it is possible only due to the specific cultural and political history of Norway and the present stable welfare situation.

The whole volume is a valuable and a very readable collection of papers.

Andrzej Zaborski

Abulḥayr Al-iṣḥbīlī (s. V/XI), *Kitābu ‘umdati ṭ-ṭabīb fī ma‘rifati n-nabāt likulli labīb (Libro base del médico para el conocimiento de la botánica por todo experto)*. Edición, notas y traducción castellana, correcciones e índices de J. Bustamante, F. Corriente y M. Tilmatine, «Fuentes arábico-hispanas» 30, 33, 34, 3 vols. en 4 tomos, Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2004, 2007, 2010), 785 + 857 + 1049 (530 + 519) pp. ISBN: 978-84-00-08239-0

Works like this – its four tomes are weighty in all senses – are not published every day, nor even every year. Indeed, one would have to go back considerably further to find anything remotely comparable.

Abū l-Ḥayr’s *‘Umdah* is, undeniably, a major work, in that it provides a veritable mine of information on a whole range of fields (though with evident common grounds in many respects) including botany, the history of medicine and science in general, and also linguistics, particularly lexicography. Despite the partial edition-translation published by Asín, and the somewhat idiosyncratic edition undertaken by al-Ḥaṭṭābī, there was a clear need for a new edition and a new translation of the complete text. There was equally a need for a thorough study of the lexicographical and botanical material, and to a lesser extent material concerning other fields. Abū l-Ḥayr collected a dazzling wealth of plant names, and the resulting compendium was enhanced by its linguistic value, in that it included terms in languages that are now extinct, or have developed almost beyond recognition since the eleventh century, when the *‘Umdah* was compiled.

In terms of the sheer amount and quality of the lexical, botanical and mineralogical information it contains, Abū l-Ḥayr's *'Umdah* is clearly a landmark compilation of scientific knowledge. This new edition in four volumes is structured as follows:

1. The first volume contains a preface in Spanish (pp. 1-2) and in Arabic (pp. 9-10), the latter including a note on the system used to transcribe the non-Arabic terms in the text; the edition of the text itself (pp. 10-689), and an index of plant names indicating the etymology of the non-Arabic terms (pp. 692-857).

2. The second volume includes its own preface (p. i), a list of the abbreviations used in the critical apparatus (pp. iii*-vii* [unnumbered]) and a complete annotated translation of the Arabic text (pp. 1-785).

3. The third volume, in two tomes, provides a general index (pp. 7-8), a preface (pp. 9-10), corrections to volumes one (pp. 11-15) and two (pp. 17-27), a full bibliography (pp. 29-35) and a complete set of indices covering: plant species (pp. 38-221), animals (pp. 222-233), minerals (pp. 234-235); an index of transcribed terms: botany (pp. 236[I]-896[II]), zoology (pp. 896-914) and mineralogy (pp. 914-916); an index of non-Arabic terms (pp. 917-965, the *loca* for the language names mentioned appearing on pp. 917-922); an index of proper names: anthroponyms, ethnonyms, demonyms and nisbas, professions and human groups, names of stars, houses and signs of the zodiac (pp. 966-984); an index of toponyms (pp. 984-1006); an index of works cited in the text (pp. 1006-1008); an index of medical and pharmacological terms (pp. 1009-1038); and finally an index of trade, industry and technology (pp. 1038-1049).

As this brief outline of the contents suggests, these volumes offer an immense amount of highly-varied and fascinating information. Hence the need for a new edition fulfilling all the requirements of textual criticism and accompanied, naturally, by a translation of the complete text together with a scholarly study. The authors have provided all this, achieving throughout the two thousand six hundred and ninety-one pages a considerable degree of scientific rigour.

The edition of the Arabic text based on the two surviving manuscripts is excellent; the text has been perfectly structured, and technical terms are numbered and thus easy to locate in the indices. References are shown in bold to distinguish them from the commentary or gloss accompanying each technical term. The Spanish translation is a faithful rendering of the Arabic text, and terms are retained in transcription. The translation, for its part, is enhanced by a detailed critical apparatus, in which the authors provide interesting linguistic and botanical information on the term or species in question. In addition to the edition of the Arabic text and the annotated translation, the two tomes of volume three contain a wealth of detailed analytical and documentary information on the various types of technical terms used in the text.

This is undoubtedly an impressive, admirable and praiseworthy achievement, the fruit of several years' painstaking work. The meticulous edition

and accurate translation (corrections to some passages are included in vol. III, 1) are matched by an outstanding critical apparatus which seeks above all to identify terms and species; this is often a challenging task, involving the identification and etymological reconstruction of lexical items and the identification of botanical, zoological and mineralogical terms used centuries ago and in places very remote from each other, as suggested by the countless terms appearing in the text. The superbly rigorous results testify to a prodigious effort on the part of the authors, from the first page to the last.

To express any reservations at all with regard to an undertaking on this vast scale would seem unfair. The following notes are in no way intended to detract from my respect and admiration for the high scientific task done by the three authors, but rather reflect the extent of my interest and at the same time my desire to contribute to the dazzling scholarship evident in their work. The notes may be of some interest, inasmuch as they provide useful etymological information on plant names which may help to chart the linguistic route travelled by a given term before it entered the Arabic language; this in turn may help to track the history of the plant in question. For example:

- *amīrbārīs* (III,1:258) < Syr. *'amabarīs*.
- *anāgāllīs* (III,1:261) < Syr. *'anagallīs* < Gr. *anagallīs*.
- *arz* (III,1:283) < Aram. *'arzā'* / Syr. *'arzā*.
- *asārūn* (III,1:284) < Sir. *'asārōn* < Gr. *ásaron*.
- *azāḍarāḥt* (III,1:300) < Aram. *'azād derakt* < Neop. *āzād deraxt*.
- *baṅḡ* (III,1:340; I:727) < Pers. *baṅ* < Sansk. *ḅaṅgā*.
- *bunduq* (III,1:355) < Aram. *pūnduq* / Syr. *pondiqā* < Gr. [*káryon*] *pontikón*.
- *hilyūn* (III,1:850-851) < Syr. *helyūn* < Gr. *héleion*.
- *idḥir* (III,1:508) < Aram. *'idḥir*.
- *iḡḡāš* (III,1:508; cf. I:694) < Aram. *'aggās* / *'aggāš* (< Akkad. *anḡašu*).
- *ihlīlaḡ* (III,1:509) < Aram. *halīlag* (cf. Syr. *hlīlqā*) < Pers. *halīlag/h* < Sansk. *harītaka*.
- *iklīl al-malik* (III,2:509) < Syr. *kēlīl malkā* < Heb. *kēlīl malkā*.
- *isfānāḥ* (III,1:511) < Neop. *espenāx*, cf. Gr. *spinákion*.
- *māzaryūn* (III,2:580; cf. I:839) < Syr. *māzaryūn* (cf. Aram. *māzaryōn*) < Pers. *māzaryūn*.
- *miškiṭrāmašīr* (III,2:583) < Syr. *mūšk ṭrāmašīr* < Pers. *mosk tarmašīr*.
- *mulūḥiyā* (III,2:590) < Syr. *mulūḥiyā* (cf. Ar. var. *mulūḥiyā*) < Gr. *molóché*.
- *nārdīn* (III,2:603) < Syr. *nārdīn* < gr. *nārdinon* < Sank. *naladā*.
- *sūrunḡān* (III,2:717; cf. I:776) < Syr. *sūrāṅgān* < Pers. *sūringān*.
- *ušnah* (III,2:814; cf. I:703) < Pers. *ušnah*.
- *utrūḡḡ* (III,2:815) < Aram. *'utrūḡā'* / Syr. *'utrūḡā* < Neop. *toranḡ*.

The botanical term *ās* ('myrtle'; cf. I:699-700), from the Aram. *'āsā'* / Syr. *'āsā* < Akkad. *asu(m)* (cf. Old Assyrian *ašu[m]*), is missing from the indices

in vol. III,1, while *yāsamīn* is missing from III,2:832 (cf. I:854). The term *bud hindī* should be replaced by the correct form *burru l-hindī* (II, p. 287). For the romancism *qūrbuh* (III, pp. 904, 911), since diphthongs occur in documents from *al-ṭagr al-wuṣṭā*, the transcription *quw^erbuh* (< *quwarbuh*) would perhaps be appropriate, although we must say that diphthongization is not attested in the Romandalusi register in the old documents from the Baetica.

The bibliography (III,1:29-35) omits two interesting sources: Maimonides' *Šarḥ asmā' al-'uqqār* (*Šarḥ asmā' al-'uqqār. L'explication des noms de drogues. Un glossaire de matière médicale composé par Maimonide. Texte publié pour la première fois d'après le manuscrit unique avec traduction, commentaires et index par Max Meyerhof, El Cairo: Institut français d'Archéologie orientale au Caire, 1940*) and al-Kindī's *al-Aqrabādīn* (*The Medical Formulary or Aqrabadhin of Al-Kindi. Ed., trans., and glossary by Martin Levey, Madison – Milwaukee – London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966*). Similarly, I would have welcomed a reference to Immanuel Löw's enormous and fascinating *Die Flora der Juden*. 4 vols., Hildesheim – New York: Georg Olms, 1967 (= 1928), which contains a great deal of botanical information.

These remarks are, of course, purely anecdotal in terms of the huge amount of information so carefully examined in these four volumes. The quality of the research, the accuracy and splendid presentation of the glossary and translation, and the design and execution of the work as a whole, add up to an excellent overall result, and open up a whole new approach to this kind of material, perfectly and seamlessly blending the required textual, linguistic and botanic scholarly criticism.

Many scholars still believe that 'science' (as a discipline, as the fruit of man's cultural development) is somehow separate from other cultural phenomena, simply because it has developed in a linear fashion over the centuries, whereas – according to them – the disciplines grouped under what have become known as the 'Social Sciences' can only address those matters which cannot be verified by any 'scientific procedure'. Evidently, for certain fields of study (e.g. linguistics) this distinction has ceased to have any real meaning in its overall sense, since 'knowledge' has gradually been reconstructed using new basic concepts whose effectiveness within the 'Social Sciences' started to bear its best fruit from the 1970s onwards, and undoubtedly continues to do so today.

The book under review is, in many ways, an exemplary consequence of this proposition. Developments in all the varied fields of linguistics have contributed greatly to studies like this one, enhancing its particular blend of botany and historiography with outstanding results that could only be achieved through an interdisciplinary approach with a single purpose: to provide the scientific community with a source as important as the *'Umdah* in the best possible conditions, so that researchers in other disciplines, such as botany, zoology and mineralogy – as well as those working in the history of science and

medicine – can have ready access both to the source itself and to full information on all its elements.

For reasons that need not be explored here, such a feat has hitherto never been attempted, so this edition of the *'Umdah* is particularly welcome; not only has it filled a gap, but it has done so in an exemplary manner, marking a qualitative leap forward of a kind not previously attempted in Spain. For all these reasons, we can only congratulate the editors, and offer them our heartfelt thanks for producing such a meticulous scholarly text, which will be of immense value for botanical studies, Arabic studies in particular, and indeed for scientific research in general, to which scholars in the “humanities” also have an essential and important contribution to make.

Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala

Anna Krasnowolska, *Mythes, croyances populaires et symbolique animale dans la littérature persane, Paris 2012* (“*Studia Iranica*”, cahier 48, pages 1-244)

The book contains the texts of five lectures given by the author in Paris in November-December 2010 within the scope of *Conférences d'études iraniennes Ehsan et Latifeh Yarshater*. Anna Krasnowolska is the head of the Iranian Section at the Jagiellonian University's Institute of Oriental Studies in Cracow. She has published more than 130 papers on many aspects of Iranian culture and is a regarded authority in the field of Iranian studies.

The book refers to Iranian mythology, popular beliefs and symbolical animals occurring in Persian literature. The five chapters present five animals: the bull, the scorpion, the nightingale, the boar and the horse. These are by no means the marginal topics one could suspect. In archaic cultures animals were treated with respect: without bulls people could hardly cultivate the land and grow crops. When sophisticated philosophical terms had not yet been developed people used to speak about the most important things of their existence using metaphors derived from nature.

As we read in the English summary of the introduction to the present book its author approaches the problem of “the persistence and continuity as well as the constant process of transformation, of the motifs, images and ideas in Persian literature, within the passage of time and in changing cultural conditions” (p. 29).

For instance, as we learn from Chapter Three (*Le rossignol et le poète*) the famous rose-and-nightingale motif evolved. In Ferdowsi's (10th c.) *Šāhnâme* the nightingale was a singer of only one tradition: the past glory of Iran and its epic heroes (see p. 113 of the present book). In the course of time the nightingale became an enamoured lover's symbol (*âšeq*) and the hero of sublime court love