

While diplomatic correspondence with the Latin West and North Africa has received critical scholarship, much less has been written about Mamluk relations with more distant parts. An article by Rémi Dewièrè focuses on relations with the Borno sultanate in what is now Niger (pp. 658–82). A letter from the Borno sultan ʿUthmān b. Idrīs in 793/1391, recorded by al-Qalqashandī, asks the Mamluk sultan to return any enslaved Borno Muslims to Borno for protection against attacks by the Judhām Arabs. Although it does not appear that the Mamluk sultan agreed to the request, the letter did signal his acceptance as a legitimate political leader. Information on the materials used by Borno scribes for their letters is given by al-Qalqashandī, who notes that the scribe understood the basic principles of diplomatic correspondence with the Mamluks.

In addition to the focus on diplomacy, this volume offers a wealth of material on society, religion, and politics and on the range of government officials, soldiers, scholars, and merchants during the Mamluk era. These contributions provide an important resource for anyone interested in the broad historical reach of the Mamluks.

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Treasure Trove of Benefits and Variety at the Table: A Fourteenth-Century Egyptian Cookbook. Translated by NAWAL NASRALLAH. Islamic History and Civilization, vol. 148. Leiden: BRILL, 2017. Pp. xix + 704. \$172, €149 (cloth); \$155, €135 (ebook).

Historians are quite fortunate that Nawal Nasrallah has continued to gift us with her edited translations of Arabic cookbooks from the medieval Islamic world. Her latest contribution is the anonymously compiled *Kanz al-fawā'id fī tanwīr al-mawā'id*, a work highlighting the most relevant recipes and cooking styles in fourteenth-century Mamluk Egypt. The original tome includes more than 820 recipes in twenty-three chapters; for her translation Nasrallah has consulted all five extant manuscripts—housed in the Cambridge University Library, Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, Dār al-Kutub in Cairo, Oriental Public Library in Bankipore, and Gotha Research Library—as well as the 1993 published Arabic edition.

In a helpful and detailed introduction, Nasrallah outlines the manuscript's intertextual history, its composition, editing, and similarities to other medieval cookbooks. The work likely borrowed from several, including Ibn Sayyār al-Warrāq's *Kitāb al-Ṭabīkh* (tenth century), whose work Nasrallah also edited and translated (Brill, 2007). With clarity and precision, Nasrallah explains the manuscript's organization, logic, and focus. Here, she reminds us that *Kanz al-fawā'id* is "an instructive text" with generally detailed directions given in the passive voice, as polite requests, or as imperatives. Dishes are thoughtfully and playfully named, and the compiler writes directions with a presumption that his readers are familiar with various ingredients, techniques, and measurements (pp. 6–7). Importantly, the book also offers a variety of substitutions for those who could not afford more luxurious ingredients, recommending molasses, for example, instead of more expensive sugar.

Nasrallah notes that *Kanz al-fawā'id* includes recipes popular among the humblest of social groups for dishes that then became distinguished among the higher classes by the quality of ingredients, their preparation in more sophisticated kitchens, and the cooks' expertise (pp. 31–32). Indeed, the work was likely most useful in larger and wealthier households: recipes seem to require specialized equipment or "many hands to prepare [. . . including] chores of pounding, sifting, mashing, stirring, squeezing, [and] tending to the fire" (p. 44). But Nasrallah also indicates that *Kanz al-fawā'id* might have been critical for humbler cooks in Cairo's food markets who prepared specialized dishes that most people (lacking kitchens at home) ate. With its rich and diverse recipes, the text would have boosted each cook's credentials, qualifications, and repertoires, which was required by market inspectors (sing. *muḥtasib*) (p. 48).

Although this matter is still unsettled for historians, Nasrallah makes a compelling case that the work has an Egyptian provenance owing to its reliance on an array of local ingredients: Egyptian sugar, bee honey, rice and date products, natron, *mulūkhiyya* (“Jew’s mallow”) and *bāmiya* (okra), two vegetables recognized in the medieval period as native to or widely consumed in Egypt. In fact, *Kanz al-fawā'id* offers a glimpse of an Egyptian culinary repertoire that still resonates today: in addition to the aforementioned ingredients, the book includes references to items such as *fasīkh*, a salt-cured fish consumed in springtime celebrations (*Shamm al-nasīm*) as well as the widely popular squab meat, a protein source common in Egypt since ancient times (pp. 10–11). Adding mastic to cooked meat was also uniquely Egyptian, Nasrallah argues, and seems to be due to Egyptian meat’s “more gamey” taste as compared to other regions as well as to mastic’s power to fight putridity in Egypt’s hot climate (p. 48). Specific kitchen tools, such as the wooden mixer (*mifrāk* or *mafraka*) used for blending *bāmiya* and *mulūkhiyya* dishes, are also quite distinctive to Upper Egyptian (and Sudanese) cooking (pp. 415, 584).

Historically, Nasrallah reminds us, Egypt’s fertile soil and regular Nile floods ensured an abundance of local crops and the Islamic conquests added to the diversity of this bounty by introducing citrus, eggplant, taro, rice, and sugarcane to the existing cucumber, onions, leeks, radishes, lentils, chickpeas, broad beans (*fūl*), dates, grapes, and figs (pp. 21–24). Each of Egypt’s four farming seasons was renowned for special produce and each centered around the ancient Coptic Christian calendar (pp. 25–26). In the medieval period, Fustat (later Cairo) became a bustling metropolis, with a lively culinary scene where even the poor’s food needs were attended to. Some rulers, however, enforced a religio-culinary regime on the Egyptian populace: the Fatimid Shi‘i caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amrillāh (d. 1021) was known for limiting consumption of *mulūkhiyya*, arugula (*jarjīr*), and a popular taro dish (*qulqās*) because of their associations with various Sunni leaders or figureheads (p. 31). But overall, Egypt-based empires such as the Tulunids, Fatimids, Ayyubids, and Mamluks appreciated food’s role in bolstering their legitimacy and supervised an array of food-centered festivals, communal gatherings, and charity works.

Even though medieval Egypt may not have matched Abbasid Baghdad in culinary renown and sophistication, there are indications that some of its rulers had a strong interest in the culinary arts. The Fatimids’ palace kitchens were “like culinary schools,” run by slave girls-turned-cooks who were known to produce a variety of delectable dishes. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī’s youngest brother, al-Malik al-Ādil (d. 1218), was addicted to sweets, ate “like a horse,” lived a long life, and enjoyed making his own food. And some Mamluk-era writers wrote about food, particularly about popular desserts. This culinary richness is reflected in various recipes throughout the volume (p. 34).

Once past the introduction, readers should take their time browsing, reading, and absorbing the translated and edited text that follows. It is a joy to read and it is full of culinary wonders. There are too many tantalizing recipes to highlight here, but food in *Kanz al-fawā'id* clearly reflected its compiler’s attention to nourishment, enjoyment, and health. Also striking is the compiler’s sheer pleasure in the material—one stumbles on recipes with such notes as “it is wonderful,” “the resulting rose vinegar will taste delicious and nice,” or “an omelet, which comes out great.” Readers will become enamored with the variety of unusual and delectable-sounding concoctions. Instructions are quite clear—more so than other medieval Islamic cookbooks—and they are punctuated with Nasrallah’s excellent notes on specific measurements and unusual ingredients. One can easily imagine recreating many of these recipes at home or, for those who teach food history courses, in a classroom kitchen setting. Nasrallah has gone the extra step of providing in an appendix (pp. 647–74) modern adaptations of twenty-two recipes from *Kanz al-fawā'id* (with accompanying pictures). Perhaps she will consider publishing an entire modern cookbook out of similarly reinterpreted recipes.

As it stands, notable recipes include mint-infused vinegar (p. 186); an omelet with meat, ginger, black pepper, parsley, coriander, cilantro, and cinnamon (p. 191); an eggless omelet made with chickpeas, onions, and spices (p. 171); all the fish recipes, but especially one with raisins and almonds (p. 213), with sumac (p. 217), and in vinegar-honey sauce, the classic medieval *sikbāj* (p. 221); a dessert called *asyūtiyya*, made with honey, pistachios, poppy seeds, and thin bread (p. 215); all the recipes for drinks, but especially *aqsīmā*, a digestive chai-like beverage made with black pepper, ginger, rosebuds,

cardamom, cloves, mace, mint leaves, and vinegar (p. 281) and a portable sugar with lemon, a “medieval Kool-Aid” (pp. 53, 284); as well as several rich recipes for hummus (pp. 378–82). In the latter part of the manuscript, there are instructions for making handwashing compounds, soaps, incenses, and aromatic oils, as well as recipes for storing fresh fruits and using them off-season. For ease of reference, Nasrallah provides a rich glossary and an easy-to-use general index at the end of the book.

The fact that I grew up in Cairo eating several of these dishes—particularly pickled eggplants, preserved lemons, *mulūkhiyya*, *bāmiya*, *fūl*, and *kishk* (prepared almost in the same way as described in the book)—is a testament to an enduring and impressive culinary heritage. Egyptian cuisine today is often dismissed or neglected by experts, who perhaps see it as too limited or simple compared to neighboring regions. But the recipes in this book show a culture that was once, and still is, deeply inspired by and connected to Turkic, Greek, Iraqi, Persian, Levantine, and even South Asian food cultures. One of Nasrallah’s main contributions here, therefore, is to spark interest in further study of Egypt’s culinary culture—both historic and contemporary—and to give attention to its distinct tastes, ingredients, tools, and techniques.

One minor suggestion would have been to offer a few more details or hypotheses on *muzawwar* (“false”) or *muzawwarāt al-buqūl* (“vegetarian”) dishes which often make an appearance in medieval Islamic cookbooks (pp. 184–92). In *Kanz al-fawā'id*, these dishes were clearly intended for the sick who required lighter fare. But in the context of fourteenth-century Egypt, with its significant Coptic Christian population, *muzawwar* foods (and other meatless and dairy-free recipes in the book) might also have been consumed or devised by Copts who followed their church’s mostly vegan fasting for much of the year.

Overall, Nasrallah’s edition is a pleasure to read. The organization is easy to follow, the notes full of important information, and the color pictures suitable and complementary. *Kanz al-fawā'id* brings medieval Cairene and Egyptian history to life and will serve as a critical primary source not only for food historians but also those interested in medieval Islamic trade, agricultural, consumption, and social history.

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Philosophy and Medicine in the Formative Period of Islam. Edited by PETER ADAMSON AND PETER PORMANN. Warburg Institute Colloquia, vol. 31. London: THE WARBURG INSTITUTE, 2017. Pp. vi + 308. \$80 (paper).

This volume of essays is the product of a conference held at the Warburg Institute in March 2013, at which the contributing authors initially presented their work on the intersections of philosophy and medicine in the Islamic world. The essays predominantly examine the “formative period” of Islam, beginning with the period of Graeco-Arabic translations in the ninth century till the end of the eleventh century. The articles are only loosely connected, with each piece exploring the connection between philosophy and medicine within the works of an author or set of authors. There is, however, much material on the Arabic reception of Greek debates, and worthwhile contributions to our understanding of the ninth- and tenth-century engagements with the Greek tradition ranging from medicine and philosophy to *kalām* and *adab*.

The book begins with a survey of some “Philosophical Topics in Medieval Arabic Medical Discourse: Problems and Prospects” by Peter Pormann (pp. 10–33). Pormann examines discussions on the mind–body problem, medical epistemology, and the genre of raising doubts (*shukūk*) across a range of medical authors and their texts. Although the essay does not provide a deep sense of any one author’s mature position(s) on any topic, it does allow readers to see the richness of philosophical discussions found in medical works, including commentaries on the Hippocratic *Aphorisms*. Next (pp. 34–47), Oliver Overwien’s insightful essay, “Hippocrates of Cos in Arabic Gnomologia,” examines two gno-