

from Southeast Asia, yet the reader may not come away with that impression from this description. The difficulty is compounded on p. 101 with the statement that cloves were imported in Islamic times, citing Levey's translation of Ibn Māsawayh's *Kitāb Jawāhir al-ṭīb al-mufrada*, inter alia from "Sofala (South Africa)." But Ibn Māsawayh uses *sufāla* as shorthand for *sufālat al-hind* ("the lower region of India"); he gives the full expression the first time he mentions the place in his account of aloeswood (P. Sbath's ed., p. 13), and he mentions *sufāla* repeatedly as a source of Southeast Asian substances such as nutmeg, mace, cardamom, and cubeb, none of which is South African. For the source of cloves at "Shalheh Island" on p. 101, Ibn Khurrādādhbih's *Shalāhiṭ*, the lands surrounding the Strait of Malacca, is intended. The "Arabic source" that provides the attestation of cloves from the Nicobar Islands turns out to be Marco Polo. The story of silent trade in cloves at Barṭayīl comes not from p. 69 of De Goeje's edition of Ibn al-Faqīh, but from the edition by Yūsuf Hādī (Beirut, 1996—it derives from a quotation in al-Qazwīnī's *Kitāb Āthār al-bilād*), which is not listed in the bibliography.

It is laudable to provide the Arabic terminology for the reader, but sometimes Amar and Lev do so inconsistently and without explanation. On p. 107, for example, in a passage from Ibn Rushd, sandalwood (*ṣandal*) is left in the Arabic with no translation, but in the paragraph below, quoting al-Nuwayrī, it is translated "sandalwood" with no gloss. On p. 97 no explanation of *dār šinī* (written as two words) is given in a translation from Ibn Rushd; on p. 74 it is explained (but written as one word). Those not familiar with the Arabic terminology may find this vacillation confusing. The volume does not have a glossary, although it includes indices of English, Arabic, and scientific names.

There are serious typographical errors that better proofreading might have caught. To note a few: *chandn* (p. 10) for *chandan*; "Asyrian plam, *Cordia myxia*" (p. 63) for Assyrian plum, *Cordia myxa*; "of Tralles" with Alexander omitted (p. 73 l. 7); "the islands of the Indian Ocean, that is, Madagascar and Zanzibar" (p. 73) should read "such as" for "that is"; "Ibn Rushed" (p. 87); same page *sīr* for *šīr* (as Dietrich) or *shīr* (this error again obscures the etymology: Pers. *shīr* "milk"); "Dioscordies" (p. 93); "rhizom" for rhizome (p. 97). Errors in referencing and documentation are also present. On p. 268 of the bibliography there are two different entries, with different titles, for Hannelore Schöinig's *Schminken, Düfte und Räucherwerk der Jemenitinnen* (Beirut/Würzburg, 2002). In the notes, Dietrich's edition of Ibn Juljul is cited with page numbers, but these numbers sometimes either refer to entry numbers (e.g., Ibn Juljul, *Die Ergänzung*, p. 7, when entry no. 7 on p. 32 is meant) or are completely off the mark (e.g., Ibn Juljul, *Die Ergänzung*, p. 17, when entry no. 37 on p. 53 is meant). In two places in chapter three the notes lead to confusion about two works by Martin Levey: in n. 3 the reference to "Levey, *The Medical Formulary*, p. 342" is to his 1966 edition of al-Kindī's *Aqrābādhīn*, but in n. 60 "Levey, *The Medical Formulary*, pp. 69–70" refers to his and Nouri al-Khaledy's 1967 edition of al-Samarqandī's *Aqrābādhīn*. Both of the referenced books do appear in the bibliography.

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*Scents and Flavors: A Syrian Cookbook*. Edited and translated by CHARLES PERRY. Library of Arabic Literature. New York: NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2017. Pp. xliii + 320. \$40.

As a topic of historical research, food is unusual for its tendency to attract, in variable proportions, academic research and hedonistic exploration. While a celebratory attitude mars the quality of some food scholars' work at times, the book under review is a good example of the best that can come out of a combination of quality scholarship and practical experience.

*Scents and Flavors: A Syrian Cookbook* is the combined edition and translation of an anonymous thirteenth-century cookbook originally entitled *Kitāb al-Wuṣla ilā l-ḥabīb fī waṣf al-ṭabiyyāt wa-l-ṭīb* (loosely translated, p. xxxix, as *Scents and Flavors the Banqueter Favours*). The editor cum translator, Charles Perry, is an independent scholar with a long career as a food writer and journalist. The volume appears in the already renowned Library of Arabic Literature (LAL) series; as we have come to

expect, after an introduction presenting a short history of cookbooks (a literary genre that was unique to the Arab world for a good part of the Middle Ages), it offers, on facing pages, a critical edition of the original Arabic text and an English translation of the same. The translation was reviewed by David Waines, a dominant figure in the field of Middle Eastern food history.

The text contains close to seven hundred recipes, many of which are variations on a base version. These are divided into ten chapters “organized roughly in parallel with the stages of a banquet” (p. xxx). Most of these recipes correspond to what a modern reader would expect from a cookbook, providing directions on how to prepare various meat dishes, pickles, sweets, drinks, and the like. The first and last two chapters, however, cover more surprising ground by offering recipes for various perfumes and incense, soaps and other hand-washing powders, and guidance “On distilling waters and perfuming the breath.” Throughout the translation and the edition, Perry uses footnotes sparingly, “with a view to making the recipes clear and perhaps usable in the kitchen” (p. xxix), and often provides measurements in metric units.

The book also offers a comprehensive glossary that includes every term potentially unfamiliar to any reader (down to “Aleppo”). Explanations given are enlightening, providing Latin names of plants, defining expressions that do not have English equivalents, and specifying the form, variety, or origin of products implied by the cookbook’s author when the original text uses general terms or when products differ from modern counterparts. The glossary is followed by a short list of weights and measures and the range of their modern equivalents, a very short bibliography, and a thorough index.

Perry acknowledges (both explicitly and in the choices he makes for the presentation) the possibility that readers may attempt to prepare some of the recipes. This acknowledgement alone shows the unique character of food history: which political or economic historian would offer practical advice to her readers? Yet far from weakening the presentation, this concern for practical uses adds tremendous value to the volume, and not only for cooks. Time and again, Perry’s experience with kitchen matters, his knowledge of the various regional cuisines of the Middle East, and his concern for the use that readers might make of the recipes enlighten the text and clarify confusing passages that might have been left unexplained by another scholar. Actual engagement with one’s topic of study is not equally available to all historians (compare, say, sensory history and the history of imperial institutions), but this volume demonstrates the value of such engagement, whose importance academia has a tendency to dismiss.

In its essence, however, this book remains a work of scholarship, which has the double effect of limiting its practical use while making the text relevant to a population of readers that far exceeds adventurous cooks. For example, some recipes specify quantities and proportions while others do not, and where a cookbook editor would intervene to provide the missing information, Perry strictly follows the original text. Likewise, the index does not attempt to identify substitutes for medieval products or places where the reader might be able to acquire exotic ingredients. This policy to follow the expectations of a scholarly volume is by no means all negative, and the comprehensiveness of the index is likely to expand the readership to a broad population of scholars of social, economic, and even literary history. Furthermore, the convenient format and quality of the translation/edition makes this volume potentially interesting material for Arabic-language instructors.

Leaving aside the divide between the expectations of scholars and cooks, a few quibbles should be mentioned here. First, in the introduction the author makes references to other medieval recipe collections and it would have been useful to connect these with relevant bibliographical information on existing editions and translations. More generally, much of the information provided in the introduction is not supported by any reference, and the author rarely acknowledges the existence of blind spots in our knowledge of medieval culinary practices.

Secondly, it is unclear why some measurements are given using the original Arabic terms (e.g., *dirham* and *mithqāl*, p. 9) while others are translated into modern units (kilo and gram, p. 257). This is especially problematic because the latter are calculations based on medieval units that, as Perry acknowledges in his list of weights and measures (p. 300), had different values in different locations (e.g., a *raṭl* could weigh anywhere from less than half to more than two kilos).

Finally, a bit more context to the text would have been welcome. Cuisine, especially before the advent of modern transportation and refrigeration technologies, was dependent on the availability of local ingredients. One wishes that Perry had paid more attention to the geographical implications of

this work, both when discussing the transformation of recipes that appear in collections from various regions (al-Andalus, North Africa, Iraq) and the distribution of the various manuscripts of the collection edited and translated here (Syria, Istanbul, India). Insofar as this collection was widely copied because it was extensively used by cooks, to follow Perry's assertion, how does the regional availability of various products interface with variations between manuscripts? And, if manuscripts are very consistent in their contents, does this not raise doubts about whether they were really used in kitchens? In fairness, however, answering these questions should perhaps be considered a scholarly project in itself, and it would be wonderful to see a historian take up the task of publishing a companion article that puts this volume in context.

These minor complaints carry very little weight in light of the value of this book. In an era when the edition and translation of primary sources have become undervalued, Perry and the LAL editors should be commended for publishing in a format that is useful for readers with and without knowledge of Arabic. In a scholarly environment that tends to dismiss the extra-textual knowledge that comes with engagement with the world, *Scents and Flavors* admirably demonstrates how scholars can use their personal experiences to draw the most out of medieval texts.

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*India and the Heartlands: An Eighteenth-Century World of Circulation and Exchange.* By GAGAN D. S. SOOD. Cambridge: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2016. Pp. xvii + 338. \$99.99, £64.99.

In 1748, during the French-British war, a British man-of-war stopped the *S. Catharina*, a ship flying Armenian colors, near Nagapattiman. The officer leading the inspection crew saw that a bag had been thrown over board. He fished it up and found that it contained a collection of documents and letters. The ship, with French passengers and goods aboard, was seized; fortunately, the “suspect” papers were preserved in the British Library. This book under review is based on this collection of letters, receipts, certificates, and depositions in Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish. In eight chapters Gagan Sood tries to recapture the world of the letter writers, their business, their families, their culture, their networks—in short, their life.

Chapter one is a useful overview of what Sood calls the cognitive patterns of the world in which the letter writers lived. This means that he discusses their “spheres of communication,” by identifying their building blocks (ethnicity, social status, occupation, business customs and practices, weights, measures, administrative and trading infrastructure) not only by their sociological markers, but also by way of the terms in the languages used in the letters. Although the chapter does not offer any new insights, it provides a context for what follows. The second chapter focuses on the spiritual world of the letter writers, less by discussing their religion than by providing an idea of “the vernacular understanding of the cosmos and mankind’s relationship to it” (p. 65). Basically, this means a discussion of the religious terminology and expressions used in the letters and what concerns these expressed. The third chapter is all about the importance of family relationships, in particular within the household—advice that is given, and concerns about members of the immediate family. Also, was close kinship more important than lineage? All this is highlighted by excerpts from the letters.

Chapter four deals with relationships outside the kinship group, i.e., with intimates and strangers. It discusses the importance and hierarchy of these relationships and how they were maintained. By extensively referring to the letters, Sood gives *couleur locale* to these interactions and the bonding that took place not only through economic transactions, but also through social interaction and cultural references. Chapter five is about written communication and the different languages and scripts used in the world of the letter writers, as well as the sometimes long periods of silence between letters. Sood discusses the “ranking” of the various languages, and the role of the lingua franca (Arabic, English) as opposed to regional languages. He further discusses the use of tactile languages in business transactions, and the use of various scripts, even for the same language (e.g., *siyāq*). Letters had to be written