

ARABICA

KÄS, F. — Die Mineralien in der arabischen Pharmakognosie. Eine Konkordanz zur mineralischen *Materia medica* der klassischen arabischen Heilmittelkunde nebst überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Studien. 2 Teile. (Veröffentlichungen der Orientalischen Kommission, Band 54). Verlag Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2010. (24,5 cm, 1: XVI, 598; 2: 599-1167). ISBN 978-3-447-06395-1. ISSN 0568-4447. € 198,-.

Pharmacological references to mineral substances may be found in a wide variety of Arabic sources, ranging from purely medical works to cosmographies and encyclopaedias, and it is often hard to find the correct interpretation of the terms that are used. Fabian Käs has tackled this problem by collecting and analyzing the mineral references in a large number of sources (printed editions as well as MSS) and putting them into a huge concordance which for each lemma includes, besides the references, also the relevant text passages (in Latin transliteration). The material encompasses virtually all the Arabic sources which contain pharmacological material, from the pseudo-Aristotelian *Book of Stones* and Dioskurides' *Materia Medica* (in all the available Arabic translations) to the great medical encyclopaedias and the cosmographical literature of the later centuries. Also included are the various books on stones, especially precious stones, such as Bīrūnī's *Jamāhir* and Tifāshī's *Azhār al-afkār*. Not included is the *khawāṣṣ* literature exclusively belonging to the zoological domain, such as ʿĪsā ibn ʿAlī's *Kitāb al-Manāfiʿ allatī tustafād min aʿḍāʾ al-ḥayawān*, and the many other books on animals containing sections on *khawāṣṣ*, which usually include mineral substances originating from animal bodies, such as various bezoars. The author draws the line at Rāzī's *K. al-khawāṣṣ*, which is perfectly reasonable.

Each lemma consists of the name of the mineral, with, if necessary, reference to another lemma or lemmata where it is treated, followed by a list of its occurrences in all the sources included in the survey, with quotations. The meaning of the term is then exhaustively discussed on the basis of all the available information. Since there is often confusion about the exact meaning of a mineral name, this makes the work a very useful lexicographical tool, and it is to be hoped that its use will not remain restricted to those who read German. The lemma *banafs* (the word that usually denotes the flower violet) is a case in point, providing an extensive and convincing series of arguments why this word, used for a precious stone, should not be interpreted as amethyst.

Judging by the bibliography and the commentary, the author decided to leave aside modern studies on traditional Arabic pharmacopaea, such as Max Meyerhof's *Zum Drogenhandel im islamischen Ägypten*, Helga Venzlaff's *Der marokkanische Drogenhändler und seine Ware*, and studies on the basis of Genizah material, possibly because he thought that what they might have to offer did not merit the extra effort; the work as it stands already required a Titan's effort.

The concordance is preceded by an extensive description and analysis of all the sources from which material has been taken, some sixty in all. This section also contains a staggering amount of information, and is particularly useful where unpublished sources are discussed. As an example of Käs' approach I may take his section on the physician-philosopher Ibn abī l-Ash'ath, availing myself of the opportunity to apologize for not discovering Käs' extensive discussion in time to include it in my article on Ibn abī l-Ash'ath in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 3.

Ibn abī l-Ash'ath was a physician who lived in Mosul in the 10th century and wrote, among other things, a number of medical works. Several of them are still extant, but none of them have been published. In line with the purpose of his work, Käs exclusively focuses on *K. Quwā l-adwiya al-mufrada*, which originally consisted of three *maqālat*. Two of them have (partly) been preserved, and information about mineral *materia medica* is found in the second *maqāla*. Two MSS of the text were studied. In his very detailed and extensive discussion (vol. I, pp. 37-44), Käs analyses Ibn abī l-Ash'ath's sources, pointing out his direct link to various early authorities such as Hunayn ibn Ishāq, noting that Rāzī's *Hāwī*, so often an intermediate source for such early material, is nowhere mentioned. Among the medical works mentioned are those of Ibn Māsawayh and Ibn Māssa. Ibn abī l-Ash'ath's dependency on Galen is emphasized. Käs' narrow focus on the *K. Quwā l-adwiya* clearly leaves him no room for a wider look at the author or publications about other works of his, so the fact that he wrote commentaries to several basic Galenic works and takes Galen as his leading authority in his (unfinished and unpublished) *Book of Living Beings* remains undiscussed. Käs points out that hardly any traces of the *K. Quwā l-adwiya al-mufrada* are found in later sources, with the exception of a passage on precious stones, their engraving and use in rings which is a strange *Fremdkörper* in the book but is repeatedly cited in later sources. This is a very interesting point, since it ties in with the fact that his *Book of Living Beings*, a highly interesting work, also had virtually no *Nachleben*, as I found out.

So far about Ibn abī l-Ash'ath and Käs' very detailed account. It raises another question: in the specific case of the

K. Quwā l-adwiya the meagre reception is pointed out, which is most useful, but what if we want to look for similar information about other authors in this vast sea of learning? Answering this question obviously was not the primary goal of the book, but it is a question many people might be interested in, and the available material is there. To dig it out, one would need an extensive and complete index of the occurrence of each author and work in particular lemmata, but no such index is provided. For this, a digital and searchable edition of the work would have to be available, and it is to be hoped that this will be realized in the near future in order to offer the scholarly world the full benefit of this magnificent work.

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KUNITZSCH, P. and R. LORCH — Theodosius, *De habitationibus*. Arabic and Medieval Latin Translations. (Sitzungsberichte PH, I/2011). Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, München, 2011. (22 cm, 95). ISBN 978-3-7696-1656-9. ISSN 0342-5991. € 10,-.

The name that usually comes to mind in connection with Greek astronomy and its transmission to the Islamic and the medieval Latin world is of course that of Ptolemy. Next to his *Almagest*, known as the Great Collection, however, there existed a number of smaller works. This "little astronomy" contained works on spherical astronomy by scientists such as Theodosius, Autolycus and Euclid, works that like the *Almagest* were translated into Arabic and used by scholars in the Islamic world who wrote on similar topics, such as Qusṭā ibn Lūqā and Ḥabash al-Ḥāsib.

Of Theodosius of Bithynia, who lived ca. 100 BC, three works are mentioned in Ibn an-Nadīm's *Fihrist* and Ibn al-Qifṭī's *Ta'riḫ al-ḥukamā'*: the *Sphaerica*, the *De habitationibus* and *De diebus et noctibus*. These sources do not give the name of the translator(s). The name of Qusṭā ibn Lūqā, however, is mentioned as the translator of *De habitationibus* in two of the three MSS. The text, which deals with the view of the sphere on different locations of the earth, was later translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona.

Paul Kunitzsch and Richard Lorch have now published a critical edition of these two translations on the basis of the available MSS, with the Arabic and the Latin text on opposite pages. The Arabic text was established on the basis of three MSS, with reference to the Greek edition of Fecht (1927), and the Latin on the basis of two MSS, the variants being decided on the basis of the Arabic text. The edition is followed by an English translation, which is not literal but attempts to reproduce the mathematical sense of the Arabic text. Comments are provided in footnotes. The result is an exemplary edition, which provides a valuable tool for students of both medieval Islamic and European astronomy.

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