

list of major source references represents virtually only the classic central European sources dating from some fifty to one hundred years ago, he does not fail to list Ugaritic cognates as well as information reflecting more recent research. Unfortunately for those familiar with Semitic orthographic systems, however, all references aside from Hebrew and languages employing Roman script are given in transliteration. I noticed some omissions, such as in the notation that the modern Hebrew *l-t-f* was borrowed from *latafa* or *lattafa*, where it failed to indicate that Eliezer ben Yehudah introduced the new Hebrew word from the Arabic.

This reference is easy to use, especially for those with little background in Hebrew. Verbs are listed according to their roots, and all derived verbal meanings are provided, followed by a list of other derivative forms, which are listed separately. Similarly, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and other parts of speech are listed according to spelling and independently of their root meaning, though the reader is always referred to the root form for additional information. This is a valuable English language tool for students of Hebrew, and an imaginative and stimulating reference for linguists as well.

REUVEN FIRESTONE

Boston University

The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History: A Forgotten Heritage, by MARIA ROSA MENOCA. (Middle Ages series.) xvii + 178 pages, bibliography, index. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 1987. \$29.95.

Menocal restates the brief for the "Arabist question" in studies of the medieval Romance world. We encounter the conventional topics: the possible Arabic etymon for *trobar*, William IX and Eleanor of Aquitaine, courtly love and its lyrics, the polymorphic culture of al-Andalus and the Sicilian court of Frederick II, the *muwashshahas* and *kharjas*, Petrus Alfonsi, Avicenna, Maimonides, Averroes and Aristotle, translators from Arabic such as, inter alia, Peter the Venerable and Michael Scot, *The Book of the Ladder*, and the *Divina Commedia*. She purposes, however, not to argue these cases anew. Believing that a priori hostility has caused the generally wholesale rejection of the theses without real examination of their validity, she focuses on "Western attitudes" to identify what factors in our intellectual paradigm of the "Middle Ages" have determined the exclusion of Arabic and Semitic contributions to that period of European history. Her revision would expand the canon of texts and authors to include the Andalusian and Sicilian Arabic world, heretofore irrationally banished, with a concomitant impoverishment of comparative literary studies, and loss of more enlightened readings of texts and discovery of "structural and thematic" intertextualities.

"Italy, Dante, and the Anxieties of Influence" treats why so little Arabic verse written in Sicily remains, asserts the challenge offered to Dante by the Averroist movement at Bologna, and assumes that his apology for Christianity replies to that perceived threat. The final chapter, "Other Readers, Other Readings," tackles the Decameron, calling for comparison of this text with the *Disciplina Clericalis* and the *Thousand and One Nights*. It invites a study of the medieval reception of Arabic texts and innovative interpretations of this period to help account for such anomalies as the *Tresors*, the *Dittamondo*, *Aucassin et Nicolette*, and the rise of modal grammar. It closes with a glowing picture of what students of Spanish literature might accomplish if they but heeded the splendor and importance of al-Andalus culture in the Iberian Peninsula.

The attractive physical text is cleaner than we expect these days. However, shouldn't "That Peter's translations . . . was written" (p. 43) read ". . . were written"? Read "*Delécluze*" for "Delecluze" (p. 80), "seen" for "see" (p. 117, "In her face I have seen the moon"), "Musulmans d'Espagne" for "Musulmans d' Espagne" (p. 159). The bibliography treats French titles inconsistently.

Obviously the book pleads more eloquently than it convinces by data and proof. This reader had a somewhat troubling impression that Menocal believes that if one has a strong enough conviction about something, the supporting data will somehow be found or manufactured later; that myth precedes and creates the phenomena it explains (a not unknown occurrence, however, in scholarship); that theory predates evidence. But is this how "revolutions in paradigms" really happen? An earnest, sincere call for an open mind deserves a cordial reception. But acceptance or rejection of the Arabist thesis will still depend on logic, demonstration, and proof rather than on assumed scenarios, no matter how ingenious, and innovative interpretations, no matter how clever.

LIONEL J. FRIEDMAN
University of Washington

Multi-Lingual Scholar. Gamma Productions, Inc., 710 Wiltshire Boulevard, Suite 609, Santa Monica, Calif. 90401. MLS with Font Scholar: \$350; with Laser Support Option: \$500; MLS upgrade to Laser version from dot matrix version: \$200; upgrade from 1.0/1.01: \$150; from 2.0/2.01: \$75; from 2.9/3.0/3.1: \$15. Optional laser and dot matrix fonts are available at prices varying from \$395 (Hieroglyphics) to \$25. Urdu/Arabic is \$125; Hebrew (Chaim style) is \$50.

In the absence of a sophisticated and friendly Arabic word processor, a multi-lingual word processor of limited capability has provided an interim solution. Multi-Lingual Scholar, a word processor by Gamma Productions,