Correction:

In the article by Hugo Bizzarri, "La crítica social en el *Libro de los gatos*," *JHP*, 12 (1987), 3-14, on p. 9, footnote 19 was not printed. It should read:

19 *Gran crónica de Alfonso XI*, ed. Diego Catalán (Madrid: Seminario Menéndez Pidal-Gredos, 1976), I, 369.

REVIEWS

María Rosa Menocal. *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History: A Forgotten Heritage*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987. xvii + 178 pp. ISBN: 0-8122-8056-3. $27.95.

The subtle exercise in *captatio benevolentiae* which begins the preface to this handsome book took this reviewer prisoner immediately, for I too was subjected as a credulous undergraduate to the persuasive etymologies of *trobar*: the unattested **tropare* and the appealing *turbare aquam* (in a historical semantics course in which half the examples bore a star and the other half had to do with hunting or fishing); I too was kept in the dark about Julián Ribera's suggestion that the Arabic *ṭaraba* might have been involved. How wisely chosen and evocative an example this is, then, as an introduction to Menocal's main thesis: the Arabic link was invalid, not because it did not withstand rational examination, but because it could not be true, because everyone knew that it wasn't so, because East is East and West is West and the right one we have chose. This book is about the durable unimaginability of a view of literary history which would look on Semitic elements as non-marginal, formative factors in "Western" literature. Ribera's etymology is "worthy of a place in our... discussions... only if we assume it to be thinkable in the first place." The incorporation into society of a marginalized culture is nowadays commonly attempted by positive discrimination, which is, of course, the danger of the book's approach. It is a risk generally avoided. Hispanists may feel that our rejection of the idea of cultural interpenetration is overstated, especially where the lyric is concerned, but the author is aiming, too, north of the Pyrenees and south of the Alps, where her arrows may find a truer target. She never loses the goodwill she captured from us at the outset; her recognition that she, too, is propagating a myth, and her humane approach to older myths which she seeks to modify rather than to trample, hold our attention throughout.

Other venerable contributions are revaluated. In the chapter "Rethinking the background," the Barbastro dancing-girls trip out like a Damon Runyon chorus-line in a revival of the old Menéndez Pidal number, to beguile the eye and ear of the impressionable William IX, the first in a series of key examples which includes Peter the Venerable, Frederick II, and Eleanor of Aquitaine. The chapter on courtly love is a fine critical survey, pervaded, as is the whole book, by a demand for Arabic texts to be included in the European canon of literature.

Chapter Four, "The Muwashshahat," is largely about the overall structure and perceived thematic unity of the poems, and the implications; the folly of either assessing the *muwashshaha* alone in, or even in contrast to, the courtly Arabic tradition, or snipping off the *kharja* as a romance song-fragment (which it may nevertheless have been). I did try to express something of this in pp. 133-36 of my

1977 anthology, but Menocal does it much more penetratingly, clarifying beautifully the point of the *muwashshaḥa* genre, which "is talking about itself and about language and literature at least as much as it is about its external subject; ... the poetry of a [distinctively Andalusian] society full of dialectically opposed cultural alternatives." One can accept all this, but need one necessarily proceed to the conclusion that the dialectic which unifies the two traditions within a single poem "establishes their fundamental congruence?" One could perhaps adduce in support of this the fact that most *kharjas* were in vulgar Arabic, and suggest that the use of romance adds, perhaps even casually, only one further dimension to the opposition / unity already present in the wholly Arabic examples? But the poets do stress the *alien* nature of the romance verses ("in her barbarian tongue"; "in the language of the Christians"). Moreover, the argument that the *muwashshaḥa* contains a hidden but implicit dialogue between two lovers, with which the contention explicit in Provençal love-poetry has affinities, begs the question of what is going on in the *muwashshaḥat* in which only the *kharja* is about love.

On to Italy. After pleading for an increased awareness of Sicilian Arabic poetry, and flying the colourful kite of possible "bilingual, bicultural poems, perhaps much like the *kharjas*, in Sicily," Menocal introduces a different and resourceful critical approach, akin to Sherlock Holmes's thoughts on the dog which didn't bark. Dante, the arch-Christian, the ultra-European, is seen as confirming the entrenched presence of Averroist thought in the intellectual circles of Tuscany and Bologna, inspired to create the *Commedia* by a negative Arabic influence, as a countertext, "a contrapuntal analogue of Muhammad's otherworld journey." The award of his laurels is endorsed for a victory as important as that of Charles Martel, "the repression of the influence of the Arab world on the rest of Europe."

A final chapter takes Boccaccio as a starting-point for suggestions for comparative work on medieval story-colleections, again not simply seeking narrative analogues, but with the possibility of explaining structural and outwardly contradictory aspects in terms of a pervasive cultural penetration in which al-Andalus figured as a crucial bridge. Other fields suggested for exploration of this osmosis include poetic encyclopedias, prose-poetry narratives such as *Aucassin and Nicolette*, and especially linguistic philosophy. The book ends with a trumpet-call to Hispanists to reestablish Ibn Quzman, Maimonides, Averroes, Ibn Hazm, and their like in the position they once enjoyed not simply as Andalusians, but as preeminent Spaniards and Europeans.

The style of the book is lucid, flowing, and free from breathless newspeak. There is, indeed, a combination of registers whose interplay is almost reminiscent of the *muwashshaḥa*: the persuasive cadences of the main text contrast with the harder texture of the notes, in which a succinct and mostly generous appreciation of related scholarship is coupled with some crisp words for previous critics whose views have been shaped by professional trench-warfare or ill-concealed racialism.

Frederick II appears repeatedly in this book, as a prime example of cultural symbiosis. But Frederick did see Arabs as part of another world; some of those present at his court were there purely because they were different, like the Indian servants (and even the kilted John Brown) at that of Queen Victoria. He imported Arab falconers, for example, because they used different methods from his own. My point is the difficulty of distinguishing between the deliberate acquisition of a technique perceived as alien and an unconscious acculturation. This invalidates

not one word of what Menocal so elegantly tells us, but it would be interesting to study to what degree and in what ways Arab culture continued to be perceived as exotic, and to be resisted or welcomed, not by modern critics, but by medieval Europeans. Garci Fernández and his second countess, faced with the terror and the glamour of Almanzor, epitomize the problem. Still within the field of Frederick's main diversion, we find in Pero López de Ayala (this is mere anecdote, but then so were the dancing-girls) an allusion to his meeting in Paris with a merchant of Genoa whose German employees were conveying falcons caught in Scandinavia to the sultan of Babylon. How integrated a world, one thinks initially, but Pero López (much of whose hunting vocabulary was indeed Arabic) tells this tale to throw the sultan into relief as an exotic, faraway figure of boundless wealth and self indulgence, able to buy in batches of eighty the kingly gyrfalcons, a single one of which would have been a treasure for a European nobleman, as the Arab sheikhs buy up two-year-old thoroughbreds today. We feel the same attitude in Jean de Francières, who, seeing authority in exoticism, claims as his sources "Moloxin, faulconnier du Prince d'Antioche, Michelin, faulconnier du Roy de Chypre, et Ayme Cassan, ... faulconnier du maistre de Rodes et du Grant Turc." We visualise them as bearded and turbanned, like the Arab bear-hunters who intrude, unexplained and exotic on their camels, into the otherwise orthodox northern courtliness of the Devonshire hunting tapestries. A full study of this kind of thing would take up a companion volume, to the need for which Menocal fleetingly alludes. If some day she produces it, I, for one, will hurry to buy it.

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José Manuel Fradejas Rueda, ed. Muhammad Ibn 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Umar al-Bayzār (Moamin). *Libro de los animales que cazan* (Kitāb al-Ŷawāriḥ). Edición, estudio, notas y vocabulario de... Prólogo de Manuel Alvar. Biblioteca Cinegética Española, 20. Madrid: Editorial Casariego, 1987. liii + 308.

There is no pleasure in exposing poor scholarship. Any impartial 500-word review of this edition will of necessity seem harsh since it must discuss broadly many significant errors with few justifying examples.

Because Fradejas Rueda (FR) seemingly permits every type of error possible, neither the "filólogo" nor the "cazador bibliógrafo," his intended audience, can rely on his text. Without indication he includes letters, words, and at least one phrase not contained in the text of codex Res. 270 of the Biblioteca Nacional—Madrid, his base manuscript (M). Similarly he omits letters, words, and phrases in M. He often confuses tall "s"/"f", "c"/"t", "c"/"e", "i"/"r", many vowels, and minims. Other mistranscriptions include: (M / FR) "blandas / blancas" (20),