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MARIA MAVROUDI, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: The Oneirocriticon of Achmet and Its Arabic Sources*, *The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400–1453*, vol. 36 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002). Pp. 533. \$156.00 cloth.

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The *Oneirocriticon* of Achmet is a mysterious work. Written in Greek, this Byzantine text purports to transmit the teachings of the Egyptians, Indians, and Persians on dream divination. It also contains references to Achmet, the son of Seirem, a figure seemingly to be identified with Muhammad ibn Sirin, the legendary founder of the Muslim tradition of dream interpretation. The *Oneirocriticon* is a work well known to Byzantinists. Not only is it the only full-length Christian dream manual in Greek. It is also—potentially—a valuable source for investigating a number of subjects: the transmission of knowledge between the worlds of Islam and Byzantium; the role of divination in Byzantium; and a variety of social-historical issues, not least because the text is a “mine of linguistic information especially pertinent to material culture” (p. 69). Unfortunately, until now, all such uses of the text have been hampered, primarily because we have not understood some of the most basic information about when it was composed, where, and by whom—and more important, what sources its author used. As recently as 1985, Gilbert Dagron, the doyen of French Byzantinists, could write, “If all specialists . . . agree today in recognizing in the *Oneirocriticon* a Byzantine work influenced by Islam, no one has yet elucidated the complex problem of its borrowings from the Arabic literature of the ninth and tenth centuries” (as cited p. 23).

In the present volume, Mavroudi has two primary goals. The first is to determine whether and to what extent the *Oneirocriticon* made use of Muslim sources. The second is to clarify its relationship to the 2nd-century Greek dream manual of Artemidorus. The latter undertaking is not simple, because Artemidorus’s work was also known to Muslims through an Arabic translation. Thus, if the *Oneirocriticon* used Artemidorus, one must determine whether it did so by way of Muslim sources or by way of the original. The satisfactory resolution of these issues is essential for any future use of the text. Indeed, as Mavroudi wisely argues, “Before tapping into the wealth of information [the *Oneirocriticon*] provides on the material culture of the Middle Byzantine period . . . it is imperative to know where the interpretations offered in this dreambook came from and what changes, if any, they underwent in the process of transmission” (p. 5).

In preparation to the main subject of her study, Mavroudi begins by establishing approximate dates for the text’s composition, which, she argues, must have been after the restoration of icons in 843 and before about 1075, the dates of the manuscripts that first cite it. She next turns to an examination of the earliest scholarship on the text, then to a mature analysis of the linguistic context within which it was produced, with convincing examples to suggest that its author was equipped with a sophisticated knowledge of neither Greek nor Arabic and further examples to illustrate that there are passages in the text that, while unintelligible in Greek, make fine sense if understood as too literal translations from Arabic. Mavroudi next turns to a discussion of the manuscript tradition of the work and the history of its editions and translations. It may be noted that she identifies seven new Greek witnesses and establishes that the standard edition was based on less than sound philological principles. (Perhaps it is now time to contemplate a new edition—a task for which Mavroudi seems uniquely suited.)

For the main purposes of her project, Mavroudi chooses five Muslim dream manuals for comparison with the *Oneirocriticon*. Two criteria guide her selection: for some, their early date of composition, such that they were written as close as possible to the *Oneirocriticon*; for others, their accessibility to scholars, in hopes that the use of widely available texts will facilitate further discussion. The five dream manuals used are those of Ibn Qutaybah (d. 889), Dinawari (d. ca. 1020),

Dari (fl. 11th or 12th centuries), Zahiri (d. 1468), and Nabusli (d. 1731). While many other dream manuals are known to exist from the early Middle Ages and later, Mavroudi is justified in restricting herself to this selection because of the homogeneity that has characterized the Muslim tradition of dream interpretation almost from its inception.

Well over two-thirds of Mavroudi's study is devoted to the resolution of her two main questions, which is accomplished primarily through the detailed comparison of selections from Artemidorus, the *Oneirocriticon*, and her five Muslim dream manuals. The evidence she marshals is convincing and at last puts the study of the *Oneirocriticon* on a solid foundation. In sum, she concludes: (1) the author of the *Oneirocriticon* did not make use of Artemidorus directly, but via Muslim sources; (2) in terms of structure and content, the *Oneirocriticon* represents a Christianization of one or more Muslim dream manuals; and (3) the composition of the *Oneirocriticon* is to be understood against the background of the process whereby Muslim works on science were in the 9th and 10th centuries being translated from Arabic into Greek. In the end, Mavroudi is unable to find the specific source or sources that the author of the *Oneirocriticon* may have used. It must be remembered, however, that many manuscript collections remain uncatalogued or inadequately catalogued.

The present volume is well written and meticulously researched and argued, an excellent example of the best manner of historical-critical textual analysis. Mavroudi's arguments are compelling, as well. There can now be no doubt, I think, that the *Oneirocriticon* represents a Christian adaptation in Greek of one or more Muslim dream manuals. While others have suggested this, they have more often than not done so without direct knowledge of any Arabic sources. Mavroudi, however, has based her arguments on an intimate acquaintance with the relevant Greek and Arabic sources, including some as yet unedited. It is to be hoped that her work will stimulate further research on the *Oneirocriticon*, its *nachleben* in medieval Christendom, and the light it can shed on the material culture of Byzantium and the transmission of knowledge between Muslims and Christians.

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JAWID MOJADDEDI, *The Biographical Tradition in Sufism: The Tabaqat Genre from al-Sulami to Jami*, Curzon Studies in Asian Religion (Curzon Press, 2001). Pp. 239. \$90.00 cloth.

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Hagiography is a much tortured genre. Starting with the assault of positivism and historicism, it has all too often been viewed as a repository of fanciful miracle accounts and exaggerated piety. There is also the problem of reading this genre as a straightforward biographical narrative, particularly in the context of devotional communities.

The main development in the recent critical study of hagiographies has been to probe the genre as a source for the social history of the pre-modern period. Here one can point to the groundbreaking works of Carl Ernst, Vincent Cornell, Jo-Anne Gross, Devin DeWeese, and others. The present study utilizes a different method, intertextuality, by putting various biographical dictionaries in dialogue with one another to discern underlying structures and presuppositions of each author.

Mojaddedi's *The Biographical Tradition in Sufism* represents one of the most thorough studies of early Sufi sources. The chapters in the study focus on six of the most important figures in the history of Islamic hagiography: Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami (d. 1021), Abu Nu'aym al-Isfahani (d. 1038), 'Abdullah al-Ansari (d. 1089), Abu'l-Qasim al-Qushayri (d. 1072), 'Ali al-Hujwiri (d. 1074), and 'Abd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492). It will be easily recognized that five of the six figures flourished in the 11th century, a formative period in the systematization of Sufism. The sixth figure, Jami, emerges almost 400 years later. Biographical dictionaries are a very important source of information about Sufi figures, particularly before the 11th century, which saw the development