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speaker of Arabic and of having spent over two years in the Sudan. It is important to note that her methods are based on field anthropology (case study, and situational and transactive analysis) and economics. Because of this emphasis, the author provides little historical background to the resettlement and I would not recommend her book by itself for a reader with no background regarding the Halfawi displacement. However, Salem-Murdock does recommend books by Abdalla (Isma'îl Hussein Abdalla, "The Choice of Khashm Al-Girba Area for the Resettlement of the Halfawis" [Sudan Notes and Records 51 (1970): 56–74]) and Dafalla (Hassan Dafalla, The Nubian Exodus [Khartoum, Sudan: Khartoum University Press, 1975]) for historic summaries.

Dafalla's book is a first-hand account written by the Sudanese minister who was in charge of the resettlement project at that time. It deals strictly with Nubian displacement and their initial resettlement and I would recommend it highly as background reading to Salem-Murdock's work.

Keeping with the author's anthropological methods, Salem-Murdock conducted in depth socioeconomic interviews (individual case studies combined with life histories) with two to six households at each Halfawi and Shukriya study site. She also conducted statistically valid surveys. Having a background in statistics, I was impressed with the author's methods and with the enormity of conducting such surveys with large enough samples to be statistically valid and reliable (100% of the inhabitants of village 18, more than 50 percent of households in the Arab villages on the Butana, etc.).

I have no real criticisms of this book but do make one observation. While the book was printed in 1989, the date is misleading as Salem-Murdock's studies in the Sudan took place from September to December 1978 and from June 1980 to December 1981. None of her many charts and observations go past 1982. It is a pity that the author took so long (7–8 years) to produce this fine book, which now leaves me even more anxious for more up-to-date information, comparisons, and analyses. I hope that she produces an update soon.

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An elegant mauve cover graced by an equally elegant arabesque belies the quality of the translations in this collection of individual lines from Arabic poetry. All told, there are 89 selections taken from the works of 48 poets (up to 51 if we allow that the three anonymous lines are by different poets) who span approximately a thousand years. Each line, bayt, of classical Arabic poetry is provided in Arabic followed by an Urdu translation by Qazi Saleem and then by an English translation by Ghazi Algosabi, on pages adorned with the artwork of Kamal Boullata. The addition of the Urdu translations in this reissue of the 1983 printing is unusual. Perhaps the publishers, from whom we have seen work of a generally high standard, have identified a particular trilingual readership; perhaps the lure of the subcontinental tradition of interlacing Qur'anic text and commentary with Urdu translations has appealed to the editors; or perhaps they are complying with the wishes of Algosabi, whom I take to be the principal translator. Although my purpose here is to evaluate the collection as a contribution to the English-reading public, I should like to make a brief observation about the Urdu. In general, the translations into Urdu are faithful to the meaning of the Arabic though Saleem often takes liberties, sometimes even expanding considerably upon the thought expressed in the bayt so that it sounds more lyrical in Urdu. The best example of this is with the following line of Qays b. al-Mulawwad (d. 688):

fa-in tamama‘u layla wa-tamhum bilâdahâ
‘alayya fa-lam tahmû ‘alayya ‘l-qawâfiyâ (88)

which I translate as

Even if Layla forbids and closes her world

to me, the world of verse will never be closed to me

and which he has as

mujhko malum hai layla seh nahi mil paunga

tum magar qayd nahin kar sakhte

mere khwaboko khalâ-kho meri sheru-ko (88)

[I know it is impossible for me to meet Layla

but you cannot imprison

my dreams, my thoughts, my verses]

There are also cases where he introduces a superfluous line in the Urdu: his translation of al-‘Abbâs ibn al-Ahmad’s bayt on page 89 for instance.

The prefatory remarks, entitled "A Few Prosaic Words" are brief and somewhat simplistic. After suggestion that in "classical Arabic poetry . . . it is no exaggeration to say that the line is a semi-autonomous poem within the poem,"(5) Algosabi goes on to assert, to my mind not entirely defensibly, that "Arabs rarely admire whole poems; they admire single lines".(5) Further, he writes that, in translating these lines, he has allowed himself "a fair measure of freedom. Some of the lines were molested; none were ravished"(5). Perhaps we are expected to look on
molestation with charity; I find that I cannot. In what is surely a genuine desire to share the beauty of the poetry of his tradition, Algosaii has ventured boldly into the jungle of literary translation and has fallen victim to its many dangers. The title alone, *Lyrics from Arabia*, is grossly misleading. Arabia has certainly produced a number of great poets, among whom number the pre-Islamic poets known for the *Mu‘allaqat*, but it has never been taken to mean other than the Arabian peninsula. Of Algosaii’s forty-eight named poets, seventeen are not from that region: al-Mutanabbâ and al-Ma‘arrî are both Syrians, Ibn ‘Ummâr is a Spaniard, Bashshâr a Persian, and so on. This may not seem too crucial a point but Algosaii does manage to perpetuate unfortunate misconceptions and confusion about the distinction between things Arab (the ethnic designation), things Arabian (i.e. of the peninsula), and things Arabic (characterized by the language, the literature, the food, and not particular to the peninsula alone). He goes on mistakenly to call the Arabic poetic tradition the “Arab poetic tradition”(5), implying the absence of non-Arab writers. A charitable reading of the translations would find all but fifteen of them acceptable as rendering of the Arabic. A careful reading, however, made possible by virtue of the brevity of the selections, must find fault with as many as forty of them. Infelicitous transposition of themes, needless alteration of style, and outright mistranslation interfere with the form, the meaning and the cadence of the originals.

The first *bayt*, by the Iraqi al-Shâri‘ al-Râdî (d. 1015), which treats of one of the stock themes of the Arabic *gâsidâ* is successfully translated: “My eyes turned back, the camp was no longer visible, my heart turned back”(7). Though a little terse, the sense of detachment and removal the poet feels upon leaving his beloved’s camp and of the near-impotence of the heart’s longing to return are well conveyed. These motifs are found at the beginning of a great many *gâsidas* and remain stock themes throughout the tradition. The second *bayt* of the collection, however, is “ravished.” The Arabic expresses a simple thought that captures the transformation of a mundane world into a testimony to the restorative powers of Nature. The beautiful:

dunyâ ma‘ashun li ‘l-warâ ḥatta idhâ
jâ‘a ‘r-râbi‘u fa-‘innamâ hiya manzaru (8)

is mutilated into “Earth every spring turns into a painting,” whereas it could more faithfully have read:

This world is but a livelihood for mankind till
Spring appears and turns it into a lovely canvas.

The line is by Abû Tammâm (d. 846). Five other lines from his poetry are included: they are well rendered except for the last two where the challenge of the difficult and elliptical Arabic has daunted the translator. Thus, we have a much-abbreviated “Deaths of lovers/are decreed/through beautiful eyes”(91) for

inna li ‘lâhi fi ‘l-sibâ‘i manâyâ
sallatâ‘a ‘ala ‘l-qulûb ‘l-‘uyûn

when it might more profitably have read:

Man’s fate may be to return to God
But beautiful eyes inflict such fate upon his heart!

And we read “‘Farewell’ they said, ‘Farewell whispered/my soul to the world’”(93) for:

qâlî ‘r-rahîlî fa-nâ shakaktu bi-‘annâhâ
ruhî ‘anî ‘d-dunyâ ‘turidu rahîlî

which might instead read:

When they bade farewell, I had no doubt that
my spirit, too, wished to bid this world farewell.

The nineteen selections between pages 9 and 27 are of varying merit. We are taken from a mediocre and unlyric rendition of al-‘Abbâs ibn al-Ahâf (d. 808), “Like a candle I grow/while burning away”(12), rather than “I have become like a dying wick/giving people light yet burning away,” to this pithy and successfully translated line of al-‘Abbâs ibn Mirâdîs (d. 808): “From the cup of peace/drink your fill; but from the cup of war/a sip will suffice”(19). It is regrettable that Algosaii saw fit to render Bashshâr ibn Burd’s (d. 764) “anâ wa ‘lâhi ashtâhî sîhrah ‘aynayki”(24) “By God! I am fond of your eyes” when “I, by God, crave the magic of your eyes” is what the uncomplicated Arabic in fact says. And surely Ibn Zaydûn’s lovers, cloaked in darkness, are better served by “divulged by the whisper of dawn” than by the translator’s lacklustre and inaccurate “revealed by morning”(23). All but five of the twenty-three selections between pages 28 and 50 are sound translations where there has been an attempt to retain the music of the Arabic: Abû Nuwâs’ (d. 814) “You wonder about my sickness? My health is the wonder!”(30) for “‘Attâsbîna min saqâm/sibhâti hiya ‘l-sajabu,” for example.

Algosaii does a good job of selecting lines with a wide range of different themes. The legendary valor of the tribe is juxtaposed with its susceptibility to charms in Abû Fârâs’(d. 968) “We can melt steel/but are easily melted/by beautiful eyes”(29). The very same valour will interrogate the oppressed/ in Bashshâr’s “When a King/turns into a tyrant/we talk to him/through our swords”(42). It is a shame that the fluency of the readings must occasionally be jarred by lines such as this on page 33: “‘Were you and I/to die in the same day,/please be last’” (al-‘Aqrâ‘ ibn Hâbis, d. 651).
A note about the *baya* on page 50 by 'Ishriqa al-Muhārabiyya; this poet is not mentioned in the useful "Poets' Biographical Summaries" compiled by Bassam Frangieh which is provided in the back of the book. I myself have not been able to find 'Ishriqa's name in any of the compendia of Arabic poetry.

The eleven selections that constitute pages 51 to 61 are not of a high standard. The one Irmā 'l-Qays (d. 545) selection is as bland in English as it is in Arabic: "Here we are/both strangers,strangers are relatives"(53). And this *baya* by al-Ma'arrī (d. 1058) cannot count as one of the pithy pieces for which he is widely known and praised: "It is not/May/but the roses of May/those that people love"(56). Maybe this is made up for somewhat a few pages later by a more characteristic "Life be damned/You pretty,ancient virgin"(63). As for the last thirty-five pages, excluding five abominable translations (pages 68, 73, 77, 87 and 93), Algosabi is faithful to the Arabic. (Throughout, he has not tried to duplicate the dictich form of the *baya*, opting for a less artificial shape in the English.)

The three poets described in the collection are all in this latter part of the book. Rābi'a al-Adawiyya's (d. 752) "I love you twice/because I am so passionate/because you are so perfect"(74) is a good effort to render an unwieldy Arabic:

\[\text{uhibbuki hubbayni ḥubba 'l-hawā} \\
\text{wa ḥubban li-annaka ahlun līdhākā}\]

Al-Sulaka Umm As-Sulayk (d.?), dealing with the issue of fate and of inevitable death, is as terse and summary as her translator has made her out to be: "Everything is deadly/when your time has come"(81). The last of the women poets, Safiyya al-Bāhiliyya (d. ?), is not successfully translated. Her

\[\text{kunna ka-anjumī laylin baynahā qamarun} \\
\text{yajlu 'd-dujā fa-hawā min baynihā 'l-qamaru}\]

is more at:

We were like stars around a moon 
that shone in gloom; and we were left in gloom 
when the moon was felled

than the lackluster "He was the moon,/we were the stars;/the moon was struck down,/the night is dark"(87).

All told, this is an uneven collection, coloured by the translator's tastes and his belief that it represents "almost all of the traditional themes of the classical Arab [Arabic-speaking?] poets"(5). The best of the lines are little gems, ably conveyed in English by the translator; the worst of them are violations of the spirit and the meaning of the Arabic. In between these

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**NOTES**