documented in the main part of the book, where Corrao presents 71 narratives in Italian translation, 19 taken from Sicilian, 32 from Arabic, and 20 from Turkish narrative tradition.

While the author’s historical preface is most laudable, the presentation of the texts neither mentions the sources nor contains commentaries. Considering the fact that the largest collection of Juhawiana/Nasreddiniana so far published, M.S. Kharitonov’s *Duovatt' chetyre Nasreddina* (2nd edition Moscow 1986) contains more than 1,200 items, while anecdotes on Juha/Nasreddin Hoca are known to be part of oral tradition in more than fifty distinctive language areas in the Muslim Near East (cf. U. Marzolph, “Zur Überlieferung der Nasreddin Hoca-Schwänke außerhalb des türkischen Sprachraumes”, in *Türkische Sprachen und Literaturen*, edd. I. Baldauf, K. Kreiser, S. Tezcan, Wiesbaden 1991, 275-285), a comparative annotation on the sources, analogues and variations of the tales would appear imperative in a scholarly edition. This is a general criticism, rather applying to prospective future enterprises, since Corrao’s booklet is clearly intended for a popular readership which might even find it hard to appreciate the detailed information contained in the introduction.

On a different level, I wonder whether it is advisable to argue for anything like a national character of the Sicilian Giufà (or, for that matter, the Arabic Juha). First, because of the (lack of) data; no substantial amount of reliable material from contemporary or even recent oral tradition is available. Second, and more important, jokes and anecdotes are closely linked to the context in which they are told, more so than any other more elaborate genre of folk narrative. It seems hardly permissible, then, to understand and interpret decontexted texts as general representatives of the protagonist’s characteristic traits detached from whatever situational or mental background they were rooted in. Moreover, without pushing this criticism too far, one has to bear in mind the devastating effects of Turkish folklorism on Nasreddin Hoca, culminating in ever new attempts at defining his “character” (see a number of the papers published in the *I. Milletlerarast Nasreddin Hoca Sempozyumu Bildirileri*, Ankara 1990).

Corrao’s booklet on Giufà is a beautiful introduction to the subject from the Italian point of view. Still, the Arabic Juha and his Near Eastern as well as European relatives await a full scholarly treatment similar to Franz Rosenthal’s major study on Ash’ab (*Humor in Early Islam*, Leiden 1956).

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This supplementary volume of the *Grundriss der arabischen Philologie* contains the second part of Gerhard Endress’s monumental survey of scientific and philosophical writing, almost a volume in itself, and three complementary chapters to the two previous volumes on linguistics (*Sprachwissenschaft*) and literary studies (*Literaturwissenschaft*), covering the history of Arabic philology in Europe (Harmut Bobzin), *inshâ‘* literature (Rudolf Vesely) and recent developments in Arabic fiction and drama (Wiebke Walther). The bibliographies to some of the earlier chapters (vols. I and II came out in 1982 and 1987) have been brought up to date by Reinhard Weipert.

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All the volumes share the same general aim, which is to present the essential traits of the literature written in classical and post-classical Arabic (literature here being evidently conceived of as "all that is written"), and to provide the reader with the most important bibliographical information about primary sources and about secondary studies in Arabic and a wide variety of European languages. In many cases the contributors have gone beyond a simple "state of the art" description to incorporate new research and original approaches to their subjects.

For those concerned with Arabic literature in the narrow sense, the most important chapters in this volume are those by Veselý and Walther. The survey of inshâ’ literature, the most detailed one to date in a widely accessible form, defines the term, describes the origin of Arabic official correspondence and traces its development first under the ʿAbbasids and later in Syria and Egypt. The names of those whose letters were collected to serve as models (munshaʾāt) are given, with a very short characterisation of their correspondence; these few pages provide a useful starting point for an extended study of the genre. But Veselý goes further, discussing the handbooks for chancellery officials which provide information not only about stylistics but also about the technicalities of administrative practice and the moral and intellectual qualities required of the kāṭīb. Unlike some earlier writers on this theme, he does not stop around the 11th century, but follows it through to the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, when Arabic ceased to be a language of diplomacy—at least in the Mashriq. In a final section he discusses the handbooks on the compilation of legal documents, the so-called shurūt books, which unlike the handbooks for secretaries continued to be written after the Ottoman conquest and even outside the countries where Arabic is spoken. Altogether this is a valuable pioneering contribution.

Walther’s chapter on recent fiction and drama in Arabic is intended as a sequel to Jacob Landau’s treatment of modern prose literature in vol. II. Whereas Landau, writing in 1977, confined his attention almost entirely to Egyptian, Lebanese and mahjar authors, Walther has cast her net wider to include Syrian, Palestinian and Iraqi works as well, and to add a category of writing which, treating as it does themes relevant to the whole of the Arab world, transcends the bounds of any one country; the novels of Jabra Ibrāhīm Jabra and ʿAbd al-Rahmān Munīf, for instance, are discussed under this heading. Women writers whose main concern is with issues of emancipation are treated in a separate section, but those, such as Sahar Khalīfa and Emily Naṣrallah, who are equally preoccupied with the situation in their own country are allotted space in the national sections.

Some of this is familiar territory; Egyptian fiction in particular has been studied quite intensively, and there is a limit to the new insights which can be given in a survey of this kind, although Walther certainly produces some. But other areas of modern Arabic prose are less well known. The presentation of Iraqi writing is particularly welcome, based as it evidently is on wide reading and close familiarity with the texts, and so are the occasional references to Kuwaiti authors. It is to be hoped that Walther’s planned study of Iraqi prose literature will soon appear. And if the reader misses references to some important studies in French, such as those of Vial, Ballas and Fontaine,1 they are compensated for by the presence of Russian and Polish titles in the bibliography. This is a very competent and useful chapter, taken as a whole.2

Endress’s exposition of the different branches of philosophical and scientific