

native region. He wrote under the influence of the gnostic view of the world, the gnostic diction and fantastic style of those philosophers who used the melancholy mood of a decadent age to further their theosophical and mysterious speculations. He drew on the religious thought of his time, incorporating its ideas into his system, and creating a vast vision of the history of the universe and the conflict between the two opposing principles. He illustrated his own writings, thus earning the reputation of the greatest painter of his time. Judging from his later books, which evoked earlier Manichaean poetry, in his odes, hymns and sermons Mānī piled up metaphors. He used similes and parables to allow his moods and emotions to appear in his words; he alternated outpourings of melancholy with ardent enthusiasm, and indulged in lyrical descriptions of nature, based on very accurate observation. He represented the cosmopolitan trend of his time, regaling the intellectuals with science-fiction and the broader public with visions of a happier future.

Of his Aramaic works we know of his *Book of Secrets*, *Treasure of Life*, *Great Gospel*, *Book of Giants*, *Pragmateia* (On constant endeavour), a collection of psalms, a book of letters, and others; the works themselves, and their titles, have not survived. *Ardahang* was a description and illustration of the universe and its parts, like a fantastic atlas of struggles between angels, giants and demons, the tragedy of man in an abyss of darkness, and his subsequent liberation. It is a cosmic drama of symbols shrouding the process of salvation of the human soul and its liberation from the shadows. In his *Shāhpuhrakān* (For Shāhpuhr), written in Persian, Mānī used Biblical themes and quotations, often drawn from the *Apocrypha* and the *Book of Revelations*. His works were later destroyed, and are known today only from quotations found in hostile polemic writings and in translations and imitations in the remnants of Middle Persian and Coptic Manichaean literature.

Ch. H. Puech, *Le manichéisme, son fondateur, sa doctrine* (Paris 1949); G. Widengren, *Mani und*

*der Manichäismus* (Stuttgart 1961); O. Klimenta, *Mānīs Zeit und Leben* (Prague 1962).

**Manūchehrī**, Abu'n-Najm (d c1041), Persian poet from Damghan. He was first attached to the ruler of Tabaristan, Manūchehr b. Qābūs (d 1028), then joined the Ghaznavid court where he belonged to the circle of Maḥmūd's son Mas'ūd. For that reason he cannot be properly called a disciple of 'Onṣorī (qv), whose mastery he has praised in his famous 'Candle-*qaṣīda*'. Only 2758 distichs of his poetry have been preserved which, however, prove his skill in the use of similes and realistic detail-descriptions. His poetry shows many traces of classical Arabic tradition, so that some of his *qaṣīdas* follow almost exactly the pattern and imagery established by the Arabs. He also lays more stress on acoustic than on visual imagery. This, too, may be due partly to Arabic influence. Manūchehrī is credited with the invention of the *musammaṭ*, a strophic poem which became popular with later Persian poets. He is the only Ghaznavid court-poet whose *diwān* (qv) was studied in full in the 19th century.

Trans.: A. de Biberstein-Kazimirski, *Manūchehrī, texte et traduction* (Paris 1886).

C.-H. de Fouchécour, *La Description de la nature dans la poésie lyrique persane du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris 1969).

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**maqāma** (pl. *maqāmāt*, 'Assembly'), a literary genre, introduced into Arabic literature late in the 10th century AD. Each *maqāma*, although it is an independent unit, is part of a cycle of *maqāmāt* and each one is connected with the others by a loose plot. Al-Hamadhānī is credited with inventing the *maqāma* and al-Ḥarīrī (qv) with perfecting it. Their main achievement was, however, in putting into polished writing a genre that was already being employed orally by story-tellers. The *maqāma* remained in rhymed prose but, unlike the stories told on street-corners or cafés, it ceased to be a popular form, due to its intentionally intricate language. Two characters appear regularly in the *maqāma*. One, frequently a merchant, travels around and has opportunities for meeting the second and telling his exploits. The second, who is

The main character, reminds us of the Greek mime and the hero of the later picaresque novella. Prototype of the unscrupulous rogue, he wanders around and lives by outwitting the naive by his resourceful cunning, adroit disguises, literary talent, and linguistic eloquence. Completely amoral, the rogue is nonetheless likeable and must have had the sympathy of both author and audience. *Maqāmāt* were translated into Hebrew in the 13th century, by Yehūda al-Burīzī, who also composed his own; the genre found its way into Persian, Turkish and Syriac. It was imitated in North Africa in the 17th century, and revived in Lebanon in the 19th century by Nāṣif al-Yāzījī, and in Egypt in 1907, when Muḥammad Ibrahim al-Muwayliḥī (qv) published his *Ḥudūth 'Isā b. Hishām* (The Story of 'Isā b. Hishām).

Trans.: W. Prendergast, *The Maqāmāt* (Madras 1915); also translated into French and German. KHAL 100-2; 123-6; WILA 174-9. JML

al-Maqrīzī, Abu'l-'Abbās Taqiaddīn Aḥmad (b 1364 Cairo, d 1442 Cairo), Arab historian. After holding various offices in the state administration, in religious life, and as a teacher, he became a judge in Damascus and then in Cairo, where towards the end of his life he retired to devote himself to writing. He is one of the most important Egyptian historians both for the volume of his work and for his interest in the social and cultural aspects of history. The most important of his books, *al-Mawā'iz wa'l-'tibār fī dhīkr al-khitat wa'l-āthār* (Sermons and Learning Concerning Settlements and Monuments), deals with the ancient monuments, topography and history of Egypt, particularly of Cairo. He also wrote a history of the Fatimid dynasty and a detailed history of Egypt under the Mamluks, *Kitāb as-sulūk li-ma'rifat duwal al-mulūk* (Guidance to the Understanding of Royal Dynasties). Other works worthy of note are a monograph on plague epidemics and their consequences, a book on the history of Islam in Ethiopia, and a work on minting and coins in the world of Islam and particularly in Egypt.

*maqta'*, final couplet of *ghazal* (qv), see *qit'a*.

Margiani, Revaz (b 1916 Svaneti), Georgian poet. His father was a village teacher and devoted to reviving the national feeling of the Svan people. Margiani learned Georgian both at home and in school, and went to the Languages Faculty of Tbilisi (Tiflis) University. In the last war he was on active service. His verse is mainly meditative and nature lyrics, and much of it echoes Svan folk poetry. His love for the mountains and their inhabitants enables him to understand the Abkhaz poets, whose work he translates.

Trans.: UAGP.

VAC

Marqeh, Samaritan poet and scholar in 4th century Neapolis (now Nāblus) in central Palestine, a Samaritan centre. He composed many hymns which were incorporated in the Samaritan liturgy. An extensive but clearly incomplete collection of commentaries on the *Pentateuch* (qv) and of thoughts on religious subjects has survived under the title *Memar Marqeh* (The Word of Marqeh). He is rightly regarded as the most important figure in Samaritan literature, which includes inter alia the Hebrew *Pentateuch* with many variants from the Jewish version, the Aramaic translation (*targum*, qv), and several chronicles.

J. Macdonald (ed.), *Memar Marqeh: The Teaching of Marqeh*, I, II (Berlin 1963); J. Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans* (London-Philadelphia 1964). SZS

Marzbānname, Persian fable, see *Kalile o Demne*.

al-Mas'adi, Maḥmūd (b 1911), Tunisian writer and dramatist. He studied Arabic in Paris, taught in Tunis, and was for many years Minister of Education and active in politics. His chief work, the eight-act play *as-Sudd* (The Dam, 1955), a symbolical treatment of the conflict between dream and reality, was influenced by classical Greek tragedy. The central idea of the novel *Mawlid an-nisyan* (Birth of Oblivion, 1945) is oblivion in death; his short sketches