Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

The Astonishing: a critique and re-reading of ʿAǧāʾib literature[1]

SYRINX VON HEES

①

Abstract

The use of the term ʿaǧāʾib literature' tends to imply the existence of a specific genre in Arabic literature. The aim of this essay is to deconstruct this idea, as a matter not only of producing coherent literary theory, but also of judging medieval literature on its own terms, as free as possible from modern western prejudices and assumptions of epistemological validity. Following a brief description of the way the literary genre 'literature of marvels is conceived, I will attempt to expose the shortcomings of such a literary classification. In so doing, I will try to grasp the significance of *ʿaǧāʾib* in medieval Arabic and Persian literature. With the help of one specific example, taken from the *exotic marvellous*, I will then examine the extent and manner in which Arabic and Persian literature consciously dealt with the *fantastic*. Finally, I will investigate how the idea of an ʿaǧāʾib genre came into existence.

The term 'literature of marvels' or 'ʿaǧāʾib literature' has been used frequently in a number of recent publications.[2] The use of this overarching term tends to imply the existence of a specific genre in Arabic literature and of an apparently clear notion of which texts can or cannot belong to this literary genre.

In this essay I would like to deconstruct the idea of ʿaǧāʾib literature: first because I see a grave inconsistency in the employment of this concept and secondly because of the derogatory connotations often underlying it which disqualify certain texts such as those pertaining to natural history on account of their lack of scientific seriousness. I believe it is worthwhile to dismantle the concept of ʿaǧāʾib literature, as a matter not only of producing coherent literary theory, but also of judging medieval literature in its own terms, as free as possible from modern western prejudices and assumptions of epistemological validity.

Following a brief description of the way the literary genre of 'wonder literature' is conceived, I will attempt to expose step by step the shortcomings and gaps in such a literary classification. In so doing, I will try better to grasp the significance of *ʿaǧāʾib* in medieval Arabic and Persian literature. With the help of one specific example, taken from the *exotic marvellous*,[3] I will then examine the extent and manner in which Arabic and Persian literature dealt consciously with the *fantastic*. Finally, I will

Syrinx von Hees, Orientalisches Seminar, RFWUniversitat, Regina-Pacis-Weg 7, Bonn 531113, Germany. E-mail: syrinxhees@hotmail.com

investigate how the idea of an ᶜaǧāʾib genre came into existence. I argue that the genre of literature of marvels does not exist, at least not in the way it has so far been conceptualized. Such an approach to the theme of ᶜaǧāʾib literature may end with raising more questions than it answers, but it can thus hopefully pave the way for new inquiries.

The Concept of ᶜaǧāʾib Literature

In medieval Arabic and Persian literature we frequently come across the term *ᶜaǧāʾib*. The word not only occurs in the body of the texts, but appears in a large number of titles. The prominent positioning of the term was most probably deliberate, in order to evoke the attention of the readers. Since the nineteenth century, western researchers have defined and classified Arabic literary works according to specific literary genres, based on the titles they happened to carry. Thus a group of texts is referred to as ᶜaǧāʾib literature merely because the term appears so prominently in their titles.[4] Different researchers produced different lists of ᶜaǧāʾib works, but most listings include three texts: *ᶜAǧāʾib al-Hind*,[5] *Tuḥfat al-albāb wa-nuḫbat al-aᶜǧāb*[6] and *cAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt waġarāʾib al-mawǧūdāt*[7].

It is worth providing a short description of these three representative works, in order to gain a better understanding of how the genre of ᶜaǧāʾib literature is conceived. The book *ᶜAǧāʾib-al-Hind*, 'The Wonders of India', was compiled most probably during the tenth century and was edited and translated into French between 1883 and 1886.[8] *ᶜAǧāʾib-al-Hind* consists of a number of unrelated stories of mariners, thematically comparable to the stories about Sindbad the Sailor;[9] but unlike the travels of Sindbad, these anecdotes have neither a single protagonist nor a clear starting or ending point of setting. The text does not seem to have any other order; for example, it lacks a systematic treatment of all islands of the Indian Ocean. It is a compilation of sailors' anecdotes. But it has not yet been thoroughly investigated in order to assess its literary value.

The second work that most authors classify under the rubric of ᶜaǧāʾib literature is the book *Tuḥfat al-albāb wa-nuḫbat al-aᶜǧāb*, 'Treasure of Hearts and Best Selection of Wonders', written by al-Ġarnāṭī during the twelfth century. This text was edited and partly translated into French for the first time in 1925.[10] Al-Ġarnāṭī in four parts describes jinn and men, countries and buildings, oceans and aquatic animals, excavations and graves.[11] This division provides a structured framework, dealing with zoographical and geographical themes, respectively. G. Ducatez calls it a collection of stories, their common characteristic being the marvellous.[12]

The book *ᶜAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt*, 'The Wonders of Creation', written by al-Qazwīnī in the thirteenth century, represents the archetype of the literary ᶜaǧāʾib genre, according to all researchers.[13] This work was edited as early as 1849 and translated partly into German in 1868.[14] In a systematic fashion it catalogues and describes all natural phenomena: those existing in the supralunar part of the world, i.e. planets, constellations and angels as inhabitants of the heavens; followed by the sublunar phenomena, ordered according to the four elements. The major part of the book deals with a catalogue and description of the three natural kingdoms, mineral, vegetable and animal.[15] Recent thorough investigations of *ᶜAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt* have proved it to be an encyclopaedia of natural history.[16]

Shortcomings of the Concept of ᶜaǧāʾib Literature

1. The lack of a definition

Authors who talk about ᶜaǧāʾib literature provide neither a definition of this literary genre nor an explanation of the purpose it could serve, or indeed a reasoning behind this particular categorisation of texts. Although at first glance the classification appears to be based on the titles of works containing the word *ᶜaǧāʾib*, this cannot hold as the decisive criterion, for no one has so far come up with the idea to include for example a historical text such as *ᶜAǧāʾib al-āṯār fī at-tarāǧim wa-l-aḫbār*, written in the nineteenth century by al-Ǧabartī, in this category.

Other criteria to determine whether a work could belong to this literary genre are missing. The only characteristic feature is the claim that ᶜaǧāʾib literature presents entertaining stories, most probably originating from folklore.[17] It is, of course, not only legitimate but necessary to ask whether the entertaining element in a literary text is sufficient to define a whole literary genre. This imprecise classification would lead to the inclusion of many more works in ᶜaǧāʾib literature, as for example the stories of *The Thousand and One Nights*, the Iranian *Book of Kings* or the folk epics of the Mamluk period, all of which have a pronounced and obvious character of entertainment, in many cases originating from folklore, which fascinates readers to the present day. In this regard, it is evident that the criteria which define the concept of ᶜaǧāʾib literature are applied inconsistently and sporadically. No one has ever asked what other texts could belong to this literary genre.

Interestingly, the attention of all authors who use the concept of ᶜaǧāʾib literature is focused not on fairy tales and epics, as suggested above, but on books that somehow lay claim to being scientific. At least this seems to be one further established criterion for counting a work as representative of the genre of wonder literature, even though it is never stated clearly. However, this implicit criterion makes it possible for many researchers to use the term ᶜaǧāʾib literature to dismiss the scientific validity of some texts, despite their own claim to present serious information. It is thus logical but none the less astonishing that, of all texts, the encyclopaedia of natural history by al-Qazwīnī should be considered to be the paramount example of this entertaining 'literature of marvels'.

2. Dismissal of ᶜaǧāʾib literature as unscholarly

Researchers on ᶜaǧāʾib literature have seemingly arbitrarily chosen among many works that use *ᶜaǧāʾib* in their titles those books that appear to lay claim to well-grounded scholarship. Following this line of argument, it makes sense to these researchers to deny the scientific value of these texts. (But why should the notion of ᶜaǧāʾib be contrasted with science at all?)[18] The supposed characteristic of ᶜaǧāʾib literature, namely that it consists of entertaining stories originating from folklore, is turned around to prove the unscientific or unscholarly character of the genre.[19] It is thus claimed that medieval authors are no longer interested in serious scientific research, but prefer to offer only popular entertainment. César Dubler epitomized this opinion when he declared that ᶜaǧāʾib literature leads 'from tangible reality to the realm of fancy'.[20] Interestingly enough, not a single concrete example from *ᶜAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt* (or any other text, for that matter) is used to substantiate this hypothesis of the unscholarly nature of ᶜaǧāʾib literature. It seems to be self-evident that a work that deals with the 'wonders of creation'

cannot be scholarly, but must be fictional and fantastic.[21] The question remains of course, what 'science' or 'scholarship' in this discussion stands for.

3. One-dimensional interpretation of the term ᶜaǧāʾib

A derogatory assessment of some medieval works on natural history, especially the one by al-Qazwīnī, is arrived at through the one-dimensional interpretation of the term *ᶜaǧāʾib*. The plural form *ᶜaǧāʾib* is commonly translated as 'wonders' or 'the marvellous'. Such a translation is imprecise, for many other alternatives exist, upon which I will comment towards the end of this essay. To most contemporary ears, notions of the 'wondrous' and 'marvellous' invoke alarming associations. Wonders are perceived as supernatural phenomena that cannot be explained by reason and must therefore be considered unscientific.[22] Equating the term *ᶜaǧāʾib* with the marvellous in the sense of the supernatural, unreal or fantastic, enables these authors to use the word *ᶜaǧāʾib* as a clear and convincing proof of the unscientific nature of the medieval Arabic texts under discussion. In the following, I will refute this one-dimensional interpretation of the term *ᶜaǧāʾib*, focusing particularly on its use by al-Qazwīnī.

Considering the significance of associating '*ᶜaǧāʾib*' as fantastic or supernatural with the description of *ᶜaǧāʾib* literature as unscientific, it is essential to investigate whether this term was indeed used in Arabic and Persian literature to denote the fantastic. Some researchers, such as C. Dubler, A. Miquel and L. Richter-Bernburg, distinguish two contexts, the geographical and the religious, in which the term *ᶜaǧāʾib* plays a special role. In their reading, these two areas inevitably fused together to give rise to a literary genre dedicated especially to *ᶜaǧāʾib*.[23]

First, the term appears in the context of geographical literature, for example about *ᶜaǧāʾib ad-dunyā*, the wonders of the world.[24] These reports on geographic wonders can be considered as a further development of the classical *mirabilia* tradition.[25] However, the Arab and Persian geographers extended the classical repertoire of *mirabilia* to include both exotic news from distant countries and outstanding information on famous cities.[26] If one looks only for wonders and searches for themes reflecting the fantastic and the supernatural, one is bound to find such themes in the geographical texts, for example a report on the rage of a dragon near Aleppo.[27] These incredible stories are fascinating. They catch our attention and cast the remainder of the reports into the shadow. Most entries by the geographers that are labelled *ᶜaǧāʾib* include information on very concrete objects as, for example, buildings, places, bridges, agricultural products, etc.[28] Such kinds of information were deemed by the authors themselves to be interesting and worth reporting. They were especially concerned with sights and attractions of cities and countries, due to their astonishing impact on the reader. Both the traveller who had the chance to experience them directly and the reader who did not were amazed by these sights, not because they are born out of fantasy and found only in untrue stories, but on the contrary, because they do exist in reality. It is astonishing to hear or read about the apples of Shiraz that are half sweet and half sour;[29] but the astonishment of the traveller who has the chance to savour the change in taste of these apples must be even greater. Historians, like geographers, use the term *ᶜaǧāʾib* to mark historical events of extraordinary significance and impact.[30] Roy Parviz Mottahedeh in his essay on *ᶜAǧāʾib in The Thousand and One Nights* points out convincingly that this feeling of astonishment, expressed through the verbal forms *ᶜaǧāʾib* and *taᶜaǧǧub*, is the driving force of the narration.[31] *ᶜAǧāʾib* are themes that evoke this feeling of astonishment. The term *ᶜaǧāʾib*

as it is used by Arab and Persian geographers clearly indicates the astonishing. Astonishment is evoked above all by objects that exist in reality, such as the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus[32] or the effect of high and low tides at the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates near Basra.[33] Besides these realistic geographical wonders, there exists a minor group of *ʿaǧāʾib* which are today perceived to be unrealistic and a figment of the author's imagination. This is, for instance, the case with the two fictitious cities Ǧābarsā and Ǧābalqā at the western and eastern edge of the world.[34] However, such imaginative reports play a minor role in the context of the geographical literature. More than anything else, the term *ʿaǧāʾib* refers to the realm of reality.

Secondly, the term *ʿaǧāʾib* plays an important role in the context of a religious worldview, again in the sense of 'something that astonishes'. Here it designates the wonders of God's creation, *ʿaǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt*.[35] These embrace everything God has created, the whole of nature. Hence, in the context of this religious perception as in the geographical context, *ʿaǧāʾib* refers to something real, in this case mainly to natural phenomena: the raindrop, the palm tree or the bee.[36] Here too, however, a minority of the wonders described would be regarded as fictitious, supernatural phenomena according to our present-day scientific understanding. This is the case, for example, when the medieval authors write about the unicorn or the bird called ʿAnqāʾ/Sīmurġ,[37] creatures regarded today as marvellous beasts. It is, however, significant that in relation to the whole of the described creation, these marvellous beasts represent a negligible, marginal phenomenon in the literature.

The simplistic, one-dimensional equation of *ʿaǧāʾib* with something supernatural and fantastic creates a great distortion in our comprehension and appreciation of the medieval texts. In both geographical and religious contexts, the term *ʿaǧāʾib* essentially refers to real objects, the vast majority of which belong to the realm of reality, even judging by contemporary standards of the real. Only a marginal number of themes would be clearly relegated to the realm of fancy today. In Arabic and Persian literature, I would thus argue for interpreting the term *ʿaǧāʾib* as themes that evoke astonishment.

4. Misused scale for scholarly standards

Today reports on the unicorn or the bird called ʿAnqāʾ/Sīmurġ are considered as unscientific, because modern science is not able to verify the existence of these beings. However, in medieval times such reports were accepted as transmitted lore and therefore considered part of scientific knowledge. Keeping this in mind, it is not legitimate to consider the inclusion of such supernatural phenomena in a medieval work on natural history as a proof of its author's unscientific approach. Al-Qazwīnī, in his encyclopaedia of natural history, treats such 'marvellous beasts' alongside a multitude of 'real' animals, considering all the information he was able to gather as equally worth knowing. The scientific and epistemological standards of medieval natural history are fundamentally different from those of modern science. To avoid anachronistic judgements, it is necessary to consider a medieval work within its cultural context. More importantly, however, in the medieval period, *ʿaǧāʾib* was perceived not as apposed to science but as encouraging it. Al-Qazwīnī is one pertinent example of the expression of this idea.

In the context of a religious world view *ʿaǧāʾib* are seen as stimulating research and ultimately involving the knowledge of God. Al-Qazwīnī—whose text is considered to epitomise the fantastic in the *ʿaǧāʾib* literature—gives a distinct definition in one of his four introductory passages of *ʿAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt*, clarifying what he understands by

ᶜaǧāʾib.[38] For him, this term embodies the beginning of the inquiring search that ultimately leads to the cognition of God. His declared aim is to evoke in his readers a sense of astonishment about nature; they should regain the feeling of amazement, which they used to have as children, but lost as they grew accustomed to the surrounding natural phenomena. Al-Qazwīnī dedicated his efforts to *ᶜaǧāʾib*, because to him astonishment is the driving force for an alert mind and a living faith. In principle, this thought corresponds to the well-known Aristotelian dictum: 'It is through wonder that men now begin and originally began to philosophize'.[39] It is very clear to al-Qazwīnī that all science will in the last analysis lead to the knowledge of God; a widespread idea among most medieval scholars. This belief confers on his encyclopaedic description of nature a distinct religious legitimation. The title of his book, *ᶜAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt*, 'The Wonders of Creation', elegantly sums up his religious approach to understanding nature, in which each part of the cosmos bears marvellous witness to Almighty God. Grasping nature as marvellous signs of God, which humans need to decipher in order to get closer to Him, is a common approach in the medieval Islamic world. Al-Ġazālī for example, wrote a text on the 'Secrets of Creation', *Asrār al-maḫlūqāt*, that is sometimes referred to under the title of *ᶜAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt*. In this treatise he states: 'The way to the knowledge of God . . . is through observing his creations, *maḫlūqātihī*, and contemplating the wonders of his works, *ᶜaǧāʾib maṣnūᶜātihī*'.[40] Therefore the *ᶜaǧāʾib* provide an important impetus to conducting research, especially in the field of natural history. According to the medieval authors, nature itself, when properly observed and researched, is capable of evoking the feeling of astonishment in human beings through its multi-faceted, marvellous characters. In the final analysis, this feeling ultimately leads to the knowledge of God.

Analysis of the Theme of Wonders: an example

The above example should have demonstrated that the term *ᶜaǧāʾib* in medieval Arabic and Persian literature mainly refers to real and concrete objects, and within the scientific discourse is perceived as a stimulating point of departure. However, how does one deal with those themes in medieval literature which would definitely be considered in present-day discourse as wonders, born out of fantasy? In the following, I will investigate whether all these topics at the edges of the medieval scientific discourse are accepted by the medieval authors without reservation, or whether in medieval times an awareness of fantasy and stories stemming purely from the imagination actually exists. Discussing the medieval author's consciousness, we need to understand whether any other term except *ᶜaǧāʾib* existed to refer to the marvellous in the sense of fantastic.

> 'There is in that island a kind of wild beast called rhinoceros, which pastures there like oxen and buffaloes in our country; but the bulk of that wild beast is greater than the bulk of the camel. It eats the leaves and twigs of trees. It is a remarkable beast, with a great and thick horn in the middle of its head, ten cubits in length, wherein is the figure of a man. . . .Moreover, the sailors and travellers and pilgrims in the habit of journeying about in the mountains and the lands, have told us that this wild beast, which is named rhinoceros, lifts the great elephant upon its horn. It pastures with it upon the island and the shores, without being sensible of it, while the elephant dies upon its horn. The elephant's fat, melting by the heat of the sun, flowing upon its head, enters its

eyes, so that it becomes blind. Then it lies down upon the shore, and the (gigantic bird) Rukh comes to it, carries it off in its talons to its young ones, and feeds them with it and with that which is upon its horn.' [41]

This is a quotation from the adventure story cycle of *Sindbad the Sailor*, one of the most popular pieces of the collection of fairy tales called *The Thousand and One Nights*.[42] Originally, this cycle of adventurous journeys formed an independent book, which was supposedly written in the tenth century in Abbasid Bagdad.[43]

The literary historian Tzvetan Todorov, who was concerned with studying the fantastic as a literary genre in the European literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, defines it in this special context as an undecided condition, leaving the reader in uncertainty whether the uncanny events can be explained with unknown, but real causes, or only by supernatural phenomena. To define this fantastic literature more precisely, he differentiates it from the uncanny, on one hand, and from the supernaturally wonderful on the other.[44] Departing from this definition, I equate the fantastic in the following with the supernaturally wonderful. The wonderful, for its part, Todorov subdivides into several categories, one of them being the exotic wonderful. To explain the meaning of this term, Todorov quotes the above medieval Arabic text.[45]

This report on the rhinoceros is divided into two parts. The first portrays the animal in detail, and the second tells a story, introduced as a report by 'sailors, travellers and pilgrims', of the rhinoceros impaling an elephant on its horn. Todorov comments that the characteristic feature of the exotic marvellous is its 'mixture of natural and supernatural elements'.[46] In his opinion, the medieval text is not aware of this mixture, but presents these elements all on the same level as natural. Todorov attempts to define the exotic wonderful, that is, what we term the fantastic. He assumes that the medieval authors use the marvellous unconsciously, which in fact renders their work unscientific. On this point, his reading converges with that of most authors concerned with the literary ᶜaǧāʾib genre.

Taking the example of the exotic marvellous Todorov gives, i.e. the story of the rhinoceros that lifts the elephant on its horn into the air and using specific samples from Arab and Persian literature, I will examine how this story, so obviously generated by fantasy, was treated in medieval times. The report on the rhinoceros is part of those exotic reports from distant countries that were noted by the geographers. Manfred Ullmann claims, in the context of exotic information about Indian animals: 'These ᶜaǧāʾib wa-l-ġarāʾib were believed without much criticism'.[47] In our analysis of the texts, we will pay attention primarily to whether the medieval authors were aware of the truthfulness or otherwise of the story. Is it correct to assume, as Ullmann, Todorov and Dubler do, that the medieval texts do not establish a difference between the natural and the supernatural, between truth and untruth, between reality and fantasy? Our question pertains to the degree of consciousness exercised by the medieval authors in marking boundaries separating the real from the imaginative.

During the Middle Ages, Arabic and Persian authors paid great attention to the Indian rhinoceros, a huge exotic animal which most of them had never seen.[48] Each of the numerous authors who talk about it proceeds first to describe it.[49] For this purpose, they draw comparisons with better known animals, most commonly describing the rhinoceros as smaller than the elephant but larger than the buffalo.[50] They tell us that the rhinoceros feeds on grass and leaves and is a ruminant as cows are. They describe its horn in the middle of its head or front, most of them giving measurements such as one cubit long

and details such as broad at the bottom and pointed at the top. This description corresponds fairly well to the real picture of the rhinoceros. That is to say, most of the medieval authors present their readers with a real animal, not a marvellous beast. Exceptions to this mainstream picture exist,[51] but even in Sindbad's adventures the descriptive part follows the lines of the natural and scientific description.

However, in the adventure story the exotic animal is not only depicted, but a narrative is added, relating how the rhinoceros is able to gore the elephant on its horn. This story would today be considered as a product of fantasy. The motif of the rhinoceros attacking the elephant is a very old one, dating back to pre-Islamic times.[52] In Arabic literature it is mentioned by the famous Abbasid author al-Ǧāḥiẓ as early as in the ninth century. In his 'Book of Animals', *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*, al-Ǧāḥiẓ reports that the common people regard the rhinoceros as proverbial for power and strength because they believe 'it rams the elephant and lifts it with its horn, without feeling anything'.[53] Al-Ǧāḥiẓ makes it very clear that this is a belief held by the common people, and it should therefore not be accepted as a true report. He qualifies it as similar to a *ḫurāfa*.[54] This term refers precisely to an invented, fabricated story, belonging to the realm of fantasy.[55] That is, to label the story marvellous, in the sense of incredible, al-Ǧāḥiẓ does not count it as one of the *ᶜaǧāʾib*, but uses the word *ḫurāfa*. He explains that the exaggeration which is employed has a proverbial function.

In the geographical literature of the ninth and tenth centuries that deals with the rhinoceros as a remarkable animal living in India and its islands, this incredible report is not discussed. Some authors note the rivalry between the two enormous animals very briefly, for example: 'The elephant flees from it (the rhinoceros)'[56], or 'It (the rhinoceros) kills the elephant'.[57] Among those geographers, al-Masᶜūdī most probably knew the proverb al-Ǧāḥiẓ quotes, because he cites al-Ǧāḥiẓ in connection with another story about the rhinoceros,[58] but he does not deem it worth mentioning. The man of letters at-Tawḥīdī, who comes to speak about animals in his book *al-Imtāᶜ wa-l-muʾānasa*, 'Pleasure and Entertainment', written in the tenth century, tells us that the rhinoceros fights the elephant by slitting open its belly with its horn.[59] At-Tawḥīdī is exceptional in mentioning the method of attack, but he does not mention the fantastic lifting-up of the elephant.

One can recognize that this exotic animal, although unfamiliar or rarely sighted, was well known not only among intellectuals but among common people as well. Information about its appearance and other features was available and accepted as true knowledge, imparted in written form. Its reported strength caught the imagination of the common people, who orally circulated the fantastic story about the rhinoceros lifting up the elephant on its horn. The intellectuals evidently made a very clear distinction between those two kinds of reports. Eventually the anonymous writer, who set down the story cycle of Sindbad the Sailor's adventures, aware of the popularity of this animal, integrated it into his narration as an additional embellishment, unimportant for the main course of events. For this purpose he combined the realistic scientific description taken from the geographical literature[60] with the fantastic story taken from oral tradition. He uses the animal's portrayal and enriches it with a dramatic action. I would suggest that even in this case, the two kinds of information are separated by the phrase which interrupts the account: 'Moreover, the sailors and travellers and pilgrims in the habit of journeying about in the mountains and the lands, have told us, . . .'. Therefore, I would argue that even this audience was aware of the difference between real description and imaginative narration, or at least the author was.

In the following, I will show how the presentation of the exotic animal developed further in Arabic and Persian literature. In the early eleventh century a naturalist, the famous al-Bīrūnī, had the opportunity to explore India. In his book on the country, *Fī taḥqīq mā li-l-Hind*, he relates his personal observation of the rhinoceros, describing the animal in much more detail and telling how a young rhinoceros hit an elephant that got in its way, injuring the elephant's leg with its horn.[61] With his eyewitness account al-Bīrūnī makes it plausible that a rhinoceros can actually attack an elephant; but he does not observe the elephant being lifted up into the air, and neither of the animals dies as a result of the attack. Thus, al-Bīrūnī, certainly aware of the reported enmity between the two animals, is eager to give a realistic depiction of their encounter.

At the end of the eleventh century, a Persian scholar called Šahmardān composed an encyclopaedia of natural history in Persian, *Nuzhat-nāma-i ʿAlāʾī*, the 'Book of Refreshment' for ʿAlāʾ (that is ʿAlāʾ ad-Dawla Ḫāṣṣ Beg, Kākūyid ruler of Yazd). At the beginning of his work, he presents the animals of this world. He describes the rhinoceros as a quadruped, which fears the elephant, its enemy. But once comes across an elephant, 'it approaches it slowly, stands up on the tip of its hoofs, pulls up its forelegs and pierces the elephant's shoulder with its horn'.[62] It seems as if Šahmardān made use of al-Bīrūnī's eye-witness account of the real attack. The rhinoceros attacks only out of fear and at the cost of great effort and yet the elephant is not lifted up. But Šahmardān dramatizes the story, claiming: 'The horn gets stuck in the shoulder and cannot be removed any more. It remains in the elephant and so the rhinoceros clings to it and both die'.[63] In this way the fight ends fatally for both animals. This corresponds to the end of the narrative in Sindbad's adventures. However, this dramatic end is explained more realistically, by the horn getting stuck rather than by the fat of the elephant's carcass melting and blinding the rhinoceros. Šahmardān incorporates into his Persian encyclopaedia of natural history the fighting motif as something worth knowing and recounts it in a story with a dramatic end. He begins by describing the real attack and avoids mentioning the elephant being lifted up in the air.

Another Persian encyclopaedia of natural history entitled *ʿAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt*, 'Wonders of Creation', was written by Hamadānī in the twelfth century. He states that the rhinoceros: 'is an enemy of the elephant, which it fights against. It has a curved horn, that it thrusts into the elephant from behind; there it remains stuck, so that both die together.'[64] Hamadānī, like his Persian predecessor, reports about the fight, but in contrast to Šahmardān in a dry, matter-of-fact way. Nevertheless, he adopts the dramatic ending of the story and takes the horn getting stuck as the explanation for the disaster. However, Hamadānī at first explicitly rejects the idea of the rhinoceros's being capable of lifting up an elephant. He declares the story to be something the common people believe and calls it a lie, *durūġ*.[65] In this, he obviously adopts the opinion of al-Ǧāḥiẓ without however naming him. To convey the meaning of *hurāfa* as an invented, fabricated story, he translates it into Persian as a lie. Hamadānī accepts the fighting motif with the dramatic ending in the more realistic version as told by Šahmardān, but he protests loudly against the element of fantasy.

In these later Persian encyclopaedias on natural history, the fighting motif is integrated into the scientific discourse, possibly following al-Bīrūnī's eyewitness account. The fight is told elaborately, with a dramatic ending, but without the fantasy element of the lifting. On the contrary, we observe that this fantastic story is repeatedly rejected, as is the case with al-Ǧāḥiẓ.

Approximately a century later, the Persian scholar al-Qazwīnī composed his Arabic encyclopaedia on natural history, introduced earlier in this essay.[66] Concerning the rhinoceros al-Qazwīnī tells us: 'If it sees the elephant, it approaches it from behind, slits its belly with its horn, stands on its hind legs and lifts the elephant up, till it gets stuck on its horn. If the horn then is stuck and the rhinoceros wants to get free from the elephant, this turns out to be impossible. So it sinks down to the earth and that is how both of them die, the rhinoceros and the elephant.'[67] Al-Qazwīnī offers the most developed narration of the fighting motif we have heard so far, besides the narrative in Sindbad's adventures. Although he follows Šahmardān's more realistic account he integrates additional elements from the accumulated tradition of the theme. For example, he picks up at-Tawḥīdī's description of the rhinoceros slitting the elephant's belly. Indeed, he lets the rhinoceros lift the elephant up in the air! Without interrupting the narration, he recounts the invented story! Hence, the phrase about the rhinoceros 'standing on its hind legs', that al-Qazwīnī most probably took from Šahmardān,[68] no longer conveys the impression of strenuous effort but enhances the impression of circus-like ease in the lifting movement. With this image, al-Qazwīnī goes further even than the fantastic account. Yet he explains the final disaster more realistically by the horn being stuck in the elephant's flesh, and refrains from the fairy-tale drama of the elephant's melting fat blinding the rhinoceros. No doubt the ancient knowledge of the enmity between the rhinoceros and the elephant has been turned into a dramatic story that al-Qazwīnī most probably took over from the Persian tradition and carried to its ultimate point by introducing the fantastic moment of lifting.

During the Mamluk period several authors adopted an encyclopaedic approach to animals. An-Nuwayrī explains in his major comprehensive encyclopaedia written at the beginning of the fourteenth century, *Nihāyat al-arab*: 'It (the rhinoceros) pierces the elephant with its horn and they die together'.[69] He adds that people differ in the reasons they give for the cause of death. Some argue that the elephant is too heavy and therefore the rhinoceros is not able to pull out his horn of the elephant's belly; others argue that the horn is toxic, or—conversely—the elephant's blood is poisonous for the rhinoceros. He reports the fighting motif with its fatal end, but makes no mention of the fantastic moment of uplifting. In his large-scale, alphabetically ordered encyclopaedia on animals, *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān*, 'The Life of the Animals', dating from the fourteenth century, ad-Damīrī presents no homogeneous account of the rhinoceros. Scattered throughout his article on this animal, he gives three variants of the fighting motif. In one of them, he reports only the fatal end of the fight: 'It (the rhinoceros) kills the elephant with its horn, because the elephant cannot defend itself even though it has its tusks'.[70] In another variant, the lifting on the horn is mentioned as a possibility: 'It may happen that it rams the elephant and lifts it with its horn'.[71]. The first variant that ad-Damīrī retains, presents the fantastic story as something unquestionable: 'It pierces the elephant, takes it on its horn, where it remains between its eyes for a while'.[72] The wording of this statement is reminiscent to the one in the fairy-tale account of Sindbad the Sailor. Ad-Damīrī assembles these three variants without further comment. Al-Qalqašandī, in his encyclopaedia about knowledge-worthy subjects for Mamluk bureaucrats, *Ṣubḥ al-aᶜšā*, 'The Morning of the Night-Blind', reports about the rhinoceros: 'It may happen that it rams the elephant and slits it open with its horn'.[73]. Neither an-Nuwayrī nor al-Qalqašandī mentions the fantastic element of the lifting. Ad-Damīrī, in his turn, mentions the fantastic element as one of several variants that have been handed down on the fight between rhinoceros and elephant.

Through this detailed textual analysis, I hope to have shown that at least some Arab and Persian authors discussed in the essay clearly perceived the fantastic. They recognized the fictitious story for what it was and marked it as untrue, even in the medieval scientific context. This conclusion contradicts what researchers have so far seen as the characteristic of the ᶜaǧāʾib literature; namely, that the fantastic in the sense of the exotic and marvellous was accepted uncritically for presentation to a popular readership, with authors mixing the natural and the supernatural but not being conscious of so doing. These researchers have never verified their rather superficial impressions in detail by studying examples. Nor have they taken due account of the fact that, the medieval Arab and Persian authors used distinct terms to refer to a fictitious story, *ẖurāfa* or *durūǧ*, which designate the fantastic as a fairy story or a tall story. By contrast, these authors did not use ᶜaǧāʾib to refer to a fictitious story in the sense of 'a tale of wonders'. One can conclude that they did not use ᶜaǧāʾib to designate the marvellous in the sense of the fantastic, the untrue or the supernatural. The existence of another distinct and specific word to denote an untrue story only further strengthens the argument.

It is important to emphasize that among the examples examined in this essay, the difference between scientific truth and fictitious story is explicitly formulated not only by the early ᶜAbbasid, Muᶜtazilite scholar al-Ǧāḥiẓ, who is seen commonly as an especially critical mind, but by the Persian author Hamadānī in the twelfth century as well. (I would argue this is the case, even though Hamadānī gave his encyclopaedic work the title *ᶜAǧāʾib al-maẖlūqāt*,' The Wonders of Creation', a title that Grunebaum saw as inevitably implying the fictional and fantastic.[74]) I have also pointed out that the break between true information and fantastic narration even appears in the adventure story of Sindbad the Sailor.

On the other hand, the inquiry has shown that al-Qazwīnī, whose encyclopaedia on the 'Wonders of Creation' is generally thought of as the paramount example of ᶜaǧāʾib literature, indeed integrates an incredible, fantastic story without any break and without any further comment in his presentation of the rhinoceros. Taking his entry on the rhinoceros at face value, it seems as if he considered the fictitious story on the same level as scientific truth. It is striking how al-Qazwīnī is thus able to create an especially lucid and pleasant narration. Hence, we might conclude that this story is indeed proof of the claim that al-Qazwīnī's work is the supreme example of 'ᶜaǧāʾib literature'. He is telling an entertaining story based on the sayings of the common people, i.e. folklore. His book on the 'Wonders of Creation' might thus be judged unscholarly, transporting readers into the realm of fantasy.

I will, however, argue against classifying *ᶜAǧāʾib al-maẖlūqāt* in this way. First, one has to understand the history and development of the story in its own right. In the case of the rhinoceros, it is very clear that up to Hamadānī authors were aware of the fantasy element. One can therefore assume that al-Qazwīnā too was aware that the story was invented. In my study of al-Qazwīnī, I have analysed in detail how he makes extensive use of al-Ǧāḥiẓ's book on animals for his animal descriptions.[75] This, too, implies that he very likely knew about al-Ǧāḥiẓ's negative judgement of the story and he must have been conscious of the doubts about its truthfulness. I see in his integration of the fantastic lifting-up of the elephant a stylistic, rhetorical device. It is obvious that he is interested in dramatic narration. In a distinctive style, far more marked than that of his Persian predecessors, he consciously employs narration as a tool in his scholarship and strives to tell a good story, in order to enhance and expand, as it were, the information given the reader in the factual description.

Secondly, the place of the fantastic story must be understood within the context of the book where it appears. In the case of al-Qazwīnī, I have argued that his work on the 'Wonders of Creation', contrary to the widespread idea of ʿaǧāʾib literature, is a highly scholarly text, measured according to the standards of medieval natural history.[76] Its structure and content make clear that it is a systematic encyclopaedia on natural history. Al-Qazwīnī imparts information about nature in a philosophical and scientific framework, stimulated by the religious aim of coming to know God through knowledge of His creation. To facilitate this task, al-Qazwīnī enhances his text with skilfully employed narrative devices. Aided by the use of narration in the Persian works on natural history, he gives narration and narrativity its right place within Arabic scholarship and grants it a certain epistemological status. Al-Qazwīnī's delight in story telling as well as his unorthodox usage of the fantasy element are therefore not in contradiction with medieval standards of scholarship.

This analysis of one example of the themes of wonder demonstrates that medieval Arab and Persian authors were conscious of the supernatural marvellous, for which a distinct term exists. Furthermore, in cases where this consciousness seems absent, it is worth taking into consideration, on one hand, the historical evolution and use of a particular supernatural, fantastic element, and on the other hand the context of the specific work in which it is used. To assess the scientific value of a given text, one needs to examine each story on its own, because the vertical (diachronic) transmission of it is as relevant as the horizontal (synchronic) placement of it in the work itself.

Deconstruction of the Concept of ʿaǧāʾib Literature

I introduced briefly in this essay the concept of ʿaǧāʾib literature as it has been conceived of till now before attempting systematically to problematize some of the ideas underlying it and concluding that it is based on false assumptions. Now I will attempt to explain how this rather vague idea of ʿaǧāʾib literature came into being. As early as 1897 Carra de Vaux, most probably introducing the idea of a specific literature of marvels, refers to the passage on 'ʿAǧāʾib' in Ḥāǧǧī Ḫalīfa's (Kātib Çelebi's) bibliographical dictionary *Kašf aẓ-ẓunūn ʿan asāmī al-kutub wa-l-funūn*, 'Revealing opinions about the names of books and branches of knowledge'. Carra de Vaux refers to 'la littérature merveilleuse' and states: 'Cette sorte de littérature a été abondante chez les Arabes. On peut s'en rendre compte en parcourant l'article ʿAdjāʾib (Merveilles) dans un de leurs dictionnaires bibliographiques, par exemple dans celui de Hadji Khalfa [*sic*]. Les ouvrages les plus célèbres en ce genre [it is here that the term genre is connected to ʿaǧāʾib for the first time] sont ceux de Kazwīnī et de Dimichqui'.[77] In an article published in 1978, that is, 80 years later, Tawfiq Fahd refers to Ḥāǧǧā Ḫalīfa and his entry on ʿaǧāʾib as a proof of the existence of the literary genre.[78] Kātib Çelebī wrote his bibliography in the seventeenth century and it was translated into Latin and published by Gustav Flügel as early as 1835.[79] He gives a long list of works arranged in alphabetical order by title, and describes their content, mentioning their authors and the dates of their composition, so far as he knows them. He not only reviews single books, but also discusses branches of knowledge. So for example under the letter *ṭāʾ*, after mentioning three different works whose titles begin with *Ṭāliba, Ṭāliʿ, Ṭabāʾiʿ*, respectively, he discusses ʿilm aṭ-ṭibb, medicine, as a discipline.[80] This is followed by two entries on books whose titles begin with *ṭibb, Ṭibb Buqrāṭ*, 'The Medicine of Hippocrates' and *Ṭibb al-fiqar*, The Medicine of the Spine'.[81] These are evidently not the major texts on

medicine, which have quite different titles. In another case, Kātib Celebī discusses the discipline of *asbāb an-nuzūl*, 'Causes of the revelation', under the letter *alif*. He then mentions seven works all called *Asbāb an-nuzūl*, dealing with this discipline.[82] Under the letter ᶜ*ayn*, after reviewing books with titles beginning with the word ᶜ*uğāla* (a guide), Kātib Celebī gives a list of twenty-four titles, all beginning with the word ᶜ*ağāʾib*.[83] In this case, he does not discuss any branch of a so-called 'ᶜilm al- ᶜağāʾib'. The texts he mentions treat very diverse subjects, such as grammar, history, geography, poetry, proverbs and jokes, Quranic studies, religion, linguistics and natural history. Even though no researcher explicitly admitts to using this list as a point of departure for exploring the idea of ᶜağāʾib literature as a specific literary genre, I strongly suspect that this was the case. That being said, it must be stressed that Kātib Celebī's arrangement of texts with titles beginning with ᶜ*ağāʾib* simply corresponds to his system of alphabetical order and cannot be used as proof that they were conceived of as belonging to one and the same branch of knowledge or literary genre.

Because, first, ᶜ*ağāʾib* cannot be equated with the supernatural marvellous and, secondly, the utilization of the term in this sense cannot serve as an argument for judging the (un)scholarly character of a medieval text, the concept of ᶜağāʾib literature as a particular genre is not well-grounded and needs to be considered as invalid. The alphabetical listing of ᶜağāʾib literature by Kātib Celebī, probably taken wrongly by researchers to reflect a systematically developed concept, further goes to prove that the concept of a distinct genre is built on false assumptions.

The ideas underlying the concept of ᶜağāʾib literature were adopted for the most part without critical analysis; the concept itself thus cannot further our understanding of medieval knowledge systems and texts. It thus seems more appropriate to ignore this concept altogether. Rather, the term ᶜ*ağāʾib,* as used in Arabic and Persian literature, calls for a much deeper and more intensive examination. Closer attention to this question will no doubt be fruitful. I clearly see the necessity of interpreting and translating ᶜ*ağāʾib* in different ways depending on the context. If adventurous, sometimes quite fantastic stories about sailors are called ᶜ*ağāʾib al-baḥr*, the title refers to strange incidents in and around oceans. If an outstanding building is counted among the ᶜ*ağāʾib al-madīna*, then the term refers to the astonishing sights of the city.[84] If a book on ᶜ*ağāʾib al-luğa* treats foreign words, then the title might be translated as 'Foreign Influences on the Language'.[85] If theologians debate about ᶜ*ağāʾib al-qurʾān*, they are discussing central issues of the Islamic faith.[86] If a historical text on the life of Timur or Egypt carries the term ᶜ*ağāʾib* in its title, no one suggests connecting it with the concept of entertaining, unscientific ᶜağāʾib literature.[87] And a book about ᶜ*ağāʾib al-maḥlūqāt* deals with nature seen as a wonder of God's creation. It turns out that the term ᶜ*ağāʾib* has an enormous range of meanings, but the accompanying word makes clear which one is intended. Exploring the change in the concept's meaning over a longer period of time would be desirable. However, a clear distinction needs to be made between ᶜ*ağāʾib* in Arabic and Persian literature and our concept of the *marvellous*. Fortunately, we have at our disposal recent research focusing on the history of the *marvellous* in its own right in European intellectual thought.[88] Needless to say, the subject offers ample scope for further research and raises several crucial questions.

In my opinion, it makes little sense to bring texts together that are so different in their content and in their formal structure as the three works introduced at the beginning of this article, in order to construct a literary genre. ᶜ*Ağāʾib al-Hind*, 'The Wonders of India', could be regarded at as sailor's tales, al-Ġarnāṭī's *Tuḥfat al-albāb*, 'Treasure of the

Hearts', might be classified as geographical literature but definitely needs more detailed examination, and al-Qazwīnī's *ʿAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt*, 'Wonders of Creation', should be called an encyclopaedia on natural history. I would suggest that each text now designated as part of *ʿaǧāʾib* literature needs to be studied in greater depth to elucidate its main aim, formal structure, and specific use of the term *ʿaǧāʾib*. It may well turn out that each one belongs to a different literary genre and uses the term *ʿaǧāʾib* in a different way.

Note

1. I would like to thank the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for granting me a postdoctoral fellowship that enabled me to work on this research paper at Harvard University where I had the chance to discuss my research with Prof. Roy Mottahedeh, Prof. Wolfhart Heinrichs, Prof. Remke Kruk and Persis Berlekamp. Prof. Stefan Wild, Dr Ralf Elger and two readers from *MEL* read different versions of this paper providing useful comments and Malik Sharif, Sruti Bala and another reader from *MEL* improved my English language and style with much care. I would like to express to all of them my thanks for their kind help.

2. To give a few randomly selected examples: Marzolph, U. (2002) 'Mirabilia, Weltwunder und Gottes Kreatur. Zur Weltsicht populärer Enzyklopädien des arabisch-islamischen Mittelalters', in I. Tomkowiak (ed.) *Populäre Enzyklopädien. Von der Auswahl, Ordnung und Vermittlung des Wissens* (Zürich: Chronos), p. 94: 'Zu dieser Thematik der < Wunderwerke der Schöpfung > (arab. ʿaǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt) hat sich in den islamischen Literaturen eine eigene Gattung herausgebildet, ...'; Krawietz, B. (2002) 'Dschinn und universaler Geltungsanspruch des Islams bei Ibn Taymiyya', in R. Brunner, e.a. (eds.) *Islamstudien ohne Ende—Festschrift für Werner Ende zum 65. Geburtstag* (Würzburg: Ergon), pp. 257f: 'Auch weitere vertraute Aspekte von Dschinn, etwa als Ausdruck der wundersamen Geschöpfe Gottes, wie sie im Rahmen kosmographischer ʿaǧāʾib wa-Garāʾib-Literatur dargestellt werden, ...'.

3. This is a concept developed by Todorov, T. (1973) *The Fantastic. A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre.* Translated from the French by R. Howard (Cleveland: Press of Case Western Reserve University), chapter 3: 'The uncanny and the marvelous', pp. 41–57.

4. Carra de Vaux, B. (Novembre 1897) 'Introduction', in A. Miquel (ed.), (1984) *L'Abrégé des Merveilles. Traduit de l'arabe et annoté par Carra de Vaux. Préface d'André Miquel* (Paris: Sindbad), p. 19f.: '... la littérature merveilleuse... Cette sorte de littérature... Les ouvrages les plus célèbres en ce genre...'; Dubler, C.E. (1960) 'ʿAdjāʾib', in *EI 2*, vol. I, p. 203: 'It was, however inevitable that these two conceptions of the *ʿadjāʾib*, so different from the ideological point of view, should fuse together to give rise, especially in the Arabic geographical texts, to a particular literary genre.'; Fahd, T. (1978) 'Le Merveilleux dans la Faune, la Flore et les Minéraux', in M. Arkoun (ed.) *L'Étrange et le Merveilleux dans l'Islam Médiéval* (Paris: Edition J.A.), p. 119: 'Il y a d'abord les écrits spécifiquement consacrés à la cueillette des faits merveilleux considérés d'un point de vue assez large, englobant, en particulier, le fabuleux et le fantastique. De ces récits, plus nombreux à l'origine, semble-t-il, deux représentent des jalons importants dans l'évolution de ce genre'; Miquel, A. (1984) 'Préface' to the same work, p. 13: 'Les trois gisements des merveilles, à savoir les pays étrangers, les souvenirs de l'histoire prémusulmane et les fantaisies de la création, vont passer en de véritables sommes, aux mains de spécialistes du genre, qui s'y feront un nom.'; Ducatez, G. (1985) 'La Tuḥfa al-Albāb d'Abū Ḥāmid al-Andalusī al-Ġarnāṭī. Traduction Annotée', in *REI 53*, p. 141: 'Le texte traduit ... appartient au genre de la 'littérature des merveilles'.'; Bosworth, C.E. (1985) 'ʿAjāʾeb al-Maḫlūqāt', in *EIr*, vol. I, p. 696: 'The marvels of created things', the name of a genre of classical Islamic literature...' and p. 697: 'It is not till the 6th/12th century that the study and recounting of marvels, a subordinate element in the works of the great Arabic and Persian geographers of the 3rd–4th/9th–10th centuries, might legitimately be described as a separate genre of literature.'; Richter-Bernburg, L. (1998) 'ʿAjāʾib literature', in J.S. Meisami and P. Starkey (eds), *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, vol. 1, p. 65: 'an Islamic *mirabilia* genre' and p. 66: 'the later *ʿajāʾib* genre'.

5. Dubler, 'ʿAdjāʾib', p. 203: 'The ʿAdjāʾib al-Hind by the captain Buzurg b. Shahriyār deserves to be mentioned in the first place by its early date and by its incontestable documentary value for its period'; Miquel, Préface, p. 13: '... un autre livre, anonyme encore, donne la mesure du chemin

parcouru: les Merveilles de l'Inde ouvrent sur les rivages de l'Afrique orientale aussi bien que sur l'Asie, mais la notation concrète le cède au désir d'étonner sans relâche, et même au conte: Sindbad le Marin n'est pas loin'; Ducatez; 'La Tuḥfa', p. 144: '. . . il existe déjà avant la *Tuhfa* des ouvrages de merveilles—pensons aux *ᶜĂgā'ib al-hind*,. . .'; Sādeqī, Ğ.M. (1996) 'Preface' to Ğ.M. Sādeqī (ed.) *Muḥammad Ibn Maḥmūd Hamadānī: ᶜĂgā'ib nāmeh* (Tehran: Našr Markaz), p. 17: '(My translation: There exists another work compiled before Abū al-Mu'ayyid Balḫī's book, of which there is no Persian version. This is the book entitled "ᶜĂgā'ib al-Hind', compiled by the Captain Bozorg Šahriyār Rāmhormozī, who lived in the first half of the 4th century. It is a collection of marvellous and strange accounts (maǧmūᶜa-yi ḥikāyāt ᶜagīb wa-ġarībī), . . .'; Ḥabīb, Š.ᶜA.-Q.ᶜU. (2001) 'Kutub al-ᶜagā'ib wa-l-ġarā'ib', in *The Arabist 23*, pp. 98 – 99; Richter-Bernburg, "*Ajā'ib* literature', pp. 65f: 'Among the earliest witnesses (of the relative importance of the occult and the miraculous), roughly contemporary with, but distinct from, factual geography, are the pseudoepigraphic *ᶜAjā'ib al-Hind (Marvels of India)* attributed to the sea-captain Buzurg ibn Shahriyār al-Rāmhurmuzī (after 341/952), . . .'.

6. Dubler, "ᶜAdjā'ib', p. 203: 'It was only in the 6th/12th century that these isolated zoological, ethnological, archaeological etc. accounts acquired a particular literary form, especially through Abū Ḥāmid al-Ḡarnāṭī who collected them in his *Tuhfat al-Albāb*'; .'; Fahd, 'Le Merveilleux', pp. 119f.; Miquel, 'Préface', p. 13; Ducatez, 'La Tuḥfa', pp. 141 – 146; Bosworth, "ᶜAja'eb al-Maḫlūqāt', p. 697; Richter-Bernburg, "*Ajā'ib* literature', p. 66: 'If the distinction between a tendentially critical, factually oriented geographical literature and a more *mirabilia*-conscious genre of travel writing is correct, a second phase of writing on ᶜajā'ib began in the sixth/twelfth century, when the two began to merge. This period is represented by Abū Ḥāmid al-Gharnāṭī (d. 565/1169 – 70), . . .'.

7. Dubler, "ᶜAdjā'ib', p. 204; Fahd, 'Le Merveilleux', p. 120; Miquel, 'Préface', p. 13; Bosworth, "ᶜAja'eb al-Maḫlūqāt', p. 696; Sādeqī, Preface', p. 18; Ducatez, 'La Tuḥfa', pp. 141, 143f.; Richter-Bernburg, "*Ajā'ib* literature', p. 66.

8. Van der Lith, P.A. and Devic, L.M. (ed. and trans.) (1883 – 1886) *Kitāb ᶜĂgā'ib al-Hind. Livre des Merveilles de L'Inde* (Leiden: Brill).

9. De Goeje, M.J. (1889) 'De reizen van Sindebaad', in *De Gids*, III, 53, 2 Augustus, pp. 278 – 312; Dubler, "ᶜAdjā'ib', p. 204: '. . . the Sindbād cycle, which is but a literary adaptation of the accounts of Buzerg b. Shahriyār. . .'; Montgomery, J.E. (1999) 'Al-Sindibād and Polyphemus. Reflections on the Genesis of an Archetype', in A. Neuwirth, e.a. (eds) *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Culture* (Beirut: Franz Steiner) concludes upon comparing a specific episode from *Kitāb ᶜAjā'ib al-Hind* with al-Sindibād, pp. 453ff., on p. 457: 'It seems clear that we are dealing with a 'cycle' here similar to the expanded cycle that is the *Seven Voyages of al-Sindibād*,'; Ḥabīb, 'Kutub al-ᶜagā'ib', p. 99.

10. Ferrand, G. (1925) 'Le Tuḥfat al-albāb', in *Journal Asiatique*, pp. 1 – 148, 193 – 304.

11. Ducatez, 'La Tuḥfa', pp. 141 – 241.

12. Ducatez, 'La Tuḥfa', p. 146: 'Il s'agit d'un <recueil> de récits, dont le trait commun est leur caractère merveilleux . . .'.

13. Dubler, "ᶜAdjā'ib', p. 204: Qazwīnī, 'the best representative of the genre'; Fahd, 'Le Merveilleux', p. 120: Qazwīnīs "*ajā'ib* . . . représentent la forme définitive prise par ce genre'; Miquel, 'Préface', p. 13: 'Les trois gisement de merveilles, . . ., vont passer en de véritables sommes, aux mains de spécialistes du genre,. . . surtout. . . al-Qazwīnī'; Bosworth, "ᶜAja'eb al-Maḫlūqāt, p. 696: 'The genre of ᶜăgā'eb works reached its fullest form at the hands of the cosmographers of the 7th/13th century and after'; Sādeqī, 'Preface', p. 18: '(My translation) The most famous ᶜăgā'ib book, that we know today, is Zakariyyā' al-Qazwīnīs ᶜĂgā'ib al-maḫlūqāt wăgarā'ib al-mawǧūdāt.)'; Ducatez, 'La Tuḥfa', pp. 141, 143f., sets Qazwīnīs work off against the 'genre de la 'littérature des merveilles'', calling it a 'cosmographie des merveilles'; Richter-Bernburg, "*Ajā'ib* literature', p. 66: '. . . the later "*ajā'ib* genre . . . Zakariyyā' al-Qazwīnī (d. 682/1283), the most widely received author on the subject;. . . '.

14. Wüstenfeld, F. (ed.), (1849) *Zakarija Ben Muhammed Ben Mahmud el-Cazwini's Kosmographie. Erster Theil. Kitāb ᶜĂgā'ib al-maḫlūqāt. Die Wunder der Schöpfung. Aus den Handschriften der Bibliotheken zu Berlin, Gotha, Dresden und Hamburg* (Göttingen: Dieterichsche Buchhandlung); Ethé, H. (trans.), (1868) *Zakarija Ben Muhammed Ben Mahmūd el-Kazwini's Kosmographie. Nach der Wüstenfeld'schen Textausgabe, mit Benutzung und Beifügung der reichhaltigen Anmerkungen und Verbesserungen des Herrn Prof. Dr. Fleischer in Leipzig. . . .Die Wunder der Schöpfung. Erster Halbband* (Leipzig: Fues/R. Reisland).

15. Saʿd, F. (ed.), (3rd edn., 1978) *ʿAǧāʾib al-maḥlūqāt wa-ġarāʾib al-mawǧūdāt li-Zakariyyāʾ al-Qazwīnī* (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Ǧadīda); Giese, A. (trans.), (1986) *Al-Qazwīnī. Die Wunder des Himmels und der Erde* (Darmstadt: Erdmann). For this study the oldest known manuscript of the *Kitāb ʿAǧāʾib al-maḥlūqāt wa-Garāʾib al-mawǧūdāt* was used as the textual basis, because no satisfactory critical edition of this work exists. Today this manuscript is preserved at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, under the signature Cod. arab. 464. For further details about this manuscript, see von Hees, S. (2002) *Enzyklopädie als Spiegel des Weltbildes. Qazwīnīs Wunder der Schöpfung—eine Naturkunde des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz), pp. 91–96. A detailed account of the life of Zakariyyāʾ al-Qazwīnī and his cultural background is given on pp. 19–90.

16. See von Hees, *Enzyklopädie*, and also von Hees, S. "ʿAǧāʾib al-makhlūqāt—An Encyclopaedia on Natural History?', in R. Mottahedeh (ed.) *Organizing Knowledge: Encyclopaedic Activities in the Pre-Eighteenth Century Muslim World* (forthcoming).

17. Carra de Vaux, 'Introduction', p. 19: 'Sa compilation (d'un recueil de ces Merveilles) nous intéresse parce qu'elle nous montre la forme qu'ont prise les différentes légendes, en un mot l'état de Folklore, dans le milieu où elle a été faite'; Dubler, "Adjāʾib', p. 203: '... others can be explained only by study of the folklore of the people in question' and 204: '... what remains are collections of entertaining stories' and '... yet these ʿadjāʾib acquire a particular role in the history of thought in that they transport us from tangible reality to the realm of fancy constituted by the oriental tales'; Richter-Bernburg, *ʿAjāʾib* literature', p. 65: "Ajāʾib literature ('*mirabilia*'), a type of largely geographical or cosmographical writing with an emphasis on those real or imaginary phenomena in the physical world which challenged human understanding; these included man-made objects—prominently among them the great monuments of the pre-Islamic past—and natural phenomena, as well as marvels recounted in mariners' tales and other *mirabilia* of a folkloric nature.'

18. See Daston, L. and Park, K. (1998) *Wonders and the Order of Nature. 1150–1750* (New York: Zone Books).

19. Dubler, "Adjāʾib', p. 203: '... the writers increasingly disregarded science...' and 204: 'At this epoch the cosmographical works increasingly neglect geography...' and 'As the scientific interest decreased, however, and the popular interest in amusing literature grew, the data lost their precision and their exact geographical localization.' Carra de Vaux, B. (1921) *Les Penseurs de L'Islam. Tome Deuxième: Les Géographes, les Sciences Mathématiques et Naturelles* (Paris: Paul Geuthner), p. 33f., writes more cautiously: '... les Cosmographes. Ceux-ci sont des encyclopédistes qui ne décrivent pas seulement la terre et ses pays, mais le monde entier sous ses divers aspects: ils sont tour à tour théologiens, philosophes, naturalistes et proprement géographes. Surtout ils sont des légendaires. Ils aiment le merveilleux; ils le recherchent. Leurs livres sont de véritables collections d'Adjāib, s'est-à-dire de curiosités ou de merveilles. On pourrait croire en conséquence que la valeur scientifique en est très faible; mais il n'en est pas toujours ainsi. A côté des légendes et des fables, ils sont assez riches en documentation positive pour mériter d'être étudiés, et la plupart du temps les merveilles elles-mêmes dérivent de quelque fait réel imparfaitement observé ou transmis. Elles sont d'ailleurs intéressantes comme folk-lore.' Richter-Bernburg, *ʿAjāʾib* literature', p. 66, distinguishes between 'a tendentially critical, factually oriented geographical literature and a more mirabilia-conscious genre of travel writing' even though he questions himself whether this distinction is correct.

20. Dubler, "Adjāʾib, *EI 2*, pp. 203f..

21. Von Grunebaum, G.E. (1963) *Der Islam im Mittelalter* (Zürich: Artemis), p. 578, fn. 19, states: 'Im übrigen zeigt schon der Titel von Qazwīnīs Buch die in unserem, aber auch im griechischen Sinn durchaus unwissenschaftliche Einstellung des Verfassers, der sich vorsetzt 'Die Wunder der erschaffenen und die Merkwürdigkeiten der existenten Dinge' darzustellen und der auf alles Ungewöhnliche mit Staunen und Lob Gottes reagiert'.

22. Cf. Daston and Park, Wonders, chapter IX: 'The Enlightenment and the Anti-Marvelous', pp. 329–363.

23. Dubler, "Adjāʾib, p. 203; Miquel, 'Préface', pp. 11–13; Richter-Bernburg, *ʿAjāʾib* literature', p. 66.

24. Compare for example the section on ʿaǧāʾib ad-dunyā in: M.J. de Goeje (ed. and trans.) (1889) *Ibn Hurradāḏbih: Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik. BGA 6* (Leiden: Brill) (Arabic p.) 115f. and (French p.) 88. See also the work ʿAǧāʾib ad-dunyā by an anonymous author, compiled most probably in the early 13th century: L.P. Smirnova (ed.), (1993) *ʿAǧāʾib ad-dunyā* (Moscow: Vostoʿnaja literatura). For this work refer to: Smirnova, L.P. (1985) "ʿAjaʾeb al-donyā', in *EIr*, vol. I, p. 696.

25. Dubler, "Adjāʾib, *EI 2*, p. 203.

26. Richter-Bernburg, *ʿAjāʾib* literature', p. 65: '... continually enlarged by the thriving long-distance trade within and outside the Islamic world'. Compare for example what Ibn al-Faqīh has to say about his book *Kitāb al-buldān*. M.J. de Goeje (Ed.), (1885) *Muḫtaṣar Kitāb al-buldān*. BGA 5 (Leiden: Brill), p. 2, where Ibn al-Faqīh states that his book contains: 'aḫbār al-buldān wa-ʿaǧāʾib al-kuwar wa-l-bunyān'.

27. Ed. (no date) *Zakariyyāʾ ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd al-Qazwīnī: Ātār al-bilād wa-aḫbār al-ʿibād* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir), p. 184.

28. In the case of Aleppo for example, Qazwīnī highlights as ʿaǧāʾib of the city both the glass market and the market of the metal adorners (sūq al-muzawwiqīn) (Tauschierwarenmarkt) (Qazwīnī, *Ātār*, p. 183f).

29. These apples are counted among the ʿaǧāʾib of the city of Šīrāz (Qazwīnī, *Āār*, p. 210).

30. See for example in Ibn Kaīr: *Al-Bidāya wa-n-nihāya*. Ed. (1932ff.) (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat as-Saʿāda), part 14, p. 196: 'ʿaǧība min ʿaǧāʾib ad-dahr'; 230: 'kāʾina ʿaǧība ġarība ǧiddan'; 270: 'kāʾina ġarība ʿaǧība ǧiddan'; 280: 'tanbīh ʿalā wāqiʿa ġarība wa-ittifāq ʿaǧib'; 294: 'uʿǧūba min al-ʿaǧāʾib'; 295: 'uʿǧūuba uḫrā ġarība'. The use of the term ʿaǧāʾib in historical works would merit a special investigation. Radtke, B. (1992) *Weltgeschichte und Weltbeschreibung im Mittelalterlichen Islam*. Beiruter Texte und Studien, vol. 51 (Beirut: F. Steiner), pp. 145–147, explains that Ibn ad-Dawādārī distinguishes two possible forms of historiography. On one hand taṣdīq with a claim to absolute truth and on the other hand taʿǧīb, with no claim to absolute truth, employed to affect the soul and thus stimulate the mental capabilities.

31. Mottahedeh, R.P. (1997) 'ʿAjāʾib in The Thousand and One Nights', in R.G. Hovannisian and G. Sabagh (eds,), *The Thousand and One Nights in Arabic Literature and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 29–39.

32. Qazwīnī, *Ātār*, p. 189, praises the great Umayyad Mosque as one of the sights of the city of Damascus (wa-min ʿaǧāʾibihā), and informs, how the Damascene describe their mosque with pride as 'the unparalleled of sights, the most perfect of beauties, the all-embracing of peculiarities', (aḥad al-ʿaǧāʾib kāmil al-maḥāsin ǧāmiʿ al-ġarāʾib). Yāqūt: *Muʿǧam al-buldān*. Ed.: F. Wüstenfeld (1866–1873) *Jacut's Geographisches Wörterbuch*. 6 vols (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus), vol. II, p. 591, reports that the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus belongs to the four wonders of the world together with the dam of Sanǧa, the lighthouse of Alexandria and the church of Ruhā (Edessa).

33. Qazwīnī, *Ātār*, p. 309.

34. Qazwīnī, *Ātār*, pp. 27f.. In this case, Qazwīnī does *not* use the term ʿaǧāʾib or any of its derivatives to describe these cities!

35. Dubler, 'Adjāʾib', p. 203; Fahd, Le Merveilleux, p. 117; Ed. (1990) *Al-Ġazālī: Asrār al-maḫlūqāt* (Tunis: Dār al-maʿārif li-ṭ-ṭibāʿa wa-n-našr); Qazwīnī, *ʿAǧāʾib* (Ed. F. Saʿd, cf. footnote 14), pp. 31–35.

36. Richter-Bernburg, *ʿAjāʾib* literature', does acknowledge this fact, but simultaneously plays down its importance, e.g. on p. 65: 'with an emphasis on those real or imaginary phenomena in the physical world which challenged human understanding; these include ... natural phenomena...'; or: 'writings on ʿaǧāʾib, or the use of the term in titles, did not *per se* imply an exclusion of realistic observation, although...'; and then: 'the term ʿaǧāʾib came to be applied to those aspects of creation which included, but were not restricted to, extraordinary phenomena beyond the range of normal human experience'.

37. See for example: Qazwīnī, *ʿAǧāʾib* (Ed. F. Saʿd), pp. 421 and 456f. But in his description of the unicorn Qazwīnī refrains from recounting the hunt of the unicorn with the help of a virgin, one of the well-known mirabilia themes present in Arabic and Persian literature. See von Hees, *Enzyklopädie*, pp. 231–235.

38. Qazwīnī, *ʿAǧāʾib* (Ed. F. Saʿd), pp. 31–35; Arkoun, M. (1978) 'Peut-on parler de merveilleux dans le Coran?', in M. Arkoun (ed.) *L'Étrange et le Merveilleux dans l'Islam Médiéval* (Paris: Edition J.A.), p. 2; Fahd, 'Le Merveilleux', p. 118; Rodinson, M. (1978) 'La place du merveilleux et de l'étrange dans la conscience du monde musulman médiéval', in Arkoun, *L'Étrange et le Merveilleux*, pp. 183 and 186; Radtke, B. (1982) *Die Chronik des Ibn ad-Dawādārī. Erster Teil. Kosmographie* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner), p. 24; Ḥabīb, 'Kutub al-ʿaǧāʾib', pp. 95f.; von Hees, *Enzyklopädie*, p. 98f.; Marzolph, 'Mirabilia', p. 95f.

39. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 982 (English translation by H. Tredennick [London, 1961], p. 13). Plato agrees with this Aristotelian notion completely: 'Dieses Erleben gehört vor allem zum Philosophen: Das Erstaunen. Es gibt keinen anderen Anfang der Philosophie' (Platon, *Theaitetos* 155). See also

Wald, B. (ed.), (1995) *Joseph Piper. Werke in acht Bänden. Vol. 3: Schriften zum Philosophiebegriff* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner), pp. 43–56; Schlesier, R. (1996) 'Das Staunen ist der Anfang der Anthropologie', in H. Böhme and K.R. Scherper (eds), *Literatur und Kulturwissenschaften. Positionen, Theorien, Modelle* (Reinbek: Rowohlt), pp. 47–59.

40. Al-Ġazālī, *Asrār al-mahlūqāt* (cf. footnote 34), p. 11: . . . *aṭ-ṭarīqu ilā maʿrifati llāhi . . . an-naẓaru fī maḥlūqātihī wa-t-tafkīr fī ʿaǧāʾibi maṣnūʿātihī.* The same thought is expressed by Ġazālī in his *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm ad-dīn*, book xxxii on ṣabr/šukr. Cf. G.-H. Bousquet (ed.) (1955) *Ghazâlî. Ih'ya ʿulûm ed-dîn ou vivification des sciences de la foi. Analyse et index* (Paris: M. Besson), § 139, p. 348: 'Il faut chercher à connaître la création et les merveilles qu'elles contient, pour mieux aimer le Créateur'.

41. Lane-Poole, St. (trans.), (1906) *The Thousand and One Nights: The Arabian Nights' Entertainments translated by Edward William Lane in four volumes,* vol. 3 (London: George Bell and Sons), p. 130; cf. also Burton, R.F., (trans.), (no date) *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night,* vol. 6 (printed by the Burton Club for private subscribers only), p. 21.

42. Machuel, L. (ed.), (1884) *Alf laila wa-laila: Safarāt Sindibad al-bahri* (Alger: A. Jourdan); Ed. (1997) *Alf laila wa-laila* (Beirut: Dār al-fikr al-ʿarabī), part 3, p. 319; part 4, p. 19; Lane-Poole, *The Thousand and One Nights*, pp. 111–179; Burton, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, pp. 1–83.

43. Cf. Walther, W. (1987) *Tausendundeine Nacht. Eine Einführung* (München: Artemis), p. 136; Marzolph, U. (1997) 'Sindbad', in *EI 2*, vol. IX, p. 638.

44. Todorov, *The Fantastic*, chapter 3: 'The uncanny and the marvelous', pp. 41–57.

45. Todorov, *The Fantastic*, p. 55.

46. Todorov, *The Fantastic*, p. 55.

47. Ullmann, M. (1972) *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften im Islam.* HdO, 1. Abt., Ergb. VI, 2 (Leiden: Brill), p. 6.

48. Viré, F. (1978) 'Karkaddan', in *EI 2*, vol. 4, 647–650; von Hees, *Enzyklopädie*, pp. 205–238; Montgomery, J. (2004) 'Travelling Autopsies: Ibn Faḍlān and the Bulghār', in *MEL* 7,1, pp. 13–17: Ibn Faḍlān and the Rhinoceros.

49. For this section I have used the following sources:

Aḫbār aṣ-Ṣīn wa-l-Hind. J. Sauvaget (ed. and trans.), (1948) *Relation de la Chine et de l'Inde* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres).

Al-Bīrūnī: *Fī taḥqīq mā li-l-Hind.* Ed. (1377/1958), (Hayderabad: Maǧlis Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-ʿUāmāniyya); Sachau, E. (trans.), (1888) *Alberuni's India,* 2 vols, (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.)

Ad-Damīrī: *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā.* Ed. (1956–1957), 2 vols (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī).

Al-Ǧāḥiẓ: *Kitāb al-ḥayawān.* ʿA.-S.M. Hārūn (ed.), (2nd edn, 1385/1965–1389/1969) 7 vols (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī).

Hamadānī: *ʿAǧāʾib-nama.* Ǧ.M. Sādeqī (ed.), (1375/1996) (Teheran: Našr Markaz).

Al-Ḥāṣib, Muḥammad b. Ayyūb (?): *Tuḥfat al-ġarāʾib.* Ǧ. Matīnī (ed.), (1371/1992) (Tehran: Intišārāt Muʿīn).

Ibn Ḫurradāḏbh: *Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik.* M.J. De Goeje (ed. and trans.) (1889) *Liber viarum et regnorum.* BGA 6 (Leiden: Brill).

Al-Idrīsī: *Kitāb nuzhat al-muštāq fī-ḫtirāq al-āfāq.* E. Cerulli, F. Gabrieli, G. Levi della Vida, e.a. (eds.), (1970) *Al-Idrisi. Opus Geographicum* (Napels and Rome: Don Bosco); Maqbul, A.S. (trans.) (1960) *India and the Neighbouring Territories in the Kitab Nuzhat al-Mushtaq fi-khtiraq al-'afaq of al-Sharif al-Idrisi* (Leiden: Brill).

Al-Masʿūdī: *Murūǧ aḏ-ḏahab.* C.B. de Meynard (ed. and trans.) (1861–1917) *Les prairies d'or* (Paris: Société Asiatique).

Mustawfī al-Qazwīnī: *Nuzhat al-qulūb.* Stephenson, J. (trans.) (1928) *The Zoological Section of the Nuzhatu-l-Qulub of Hamdullah al-Mustaufi al-Qazwini.* Oriental Translation Fund. New Series, vol. 30 (London: The Royal Asiatic Society).

An-Nuwayrī: *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab.* Ed. (1923–1976) 21 vols (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya).

Al-Qalqašandī: *Subḥ al-aᶜšā*. Ed. (1913) 14 vols (Cairo: al-Maṭbaᶜa al-Amīriyya).

Al-Qazwīnī: *ᶜAǧāʾib al-maḫlūqāt wa-ġarāʾib al-mawǧūdāt*. Manuscript, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. arab. 464.

Šahmardān: *Nuzhat-nāma-i ᶜAlāʾī*. F. Djahanpur (ed.) (1362/1983) (Tehran: Muʾassasa-yi Muṭāliᶜāt wa-taḥqīqāt-e farhangī).

At-Tawḥīdī: *Kitāb al-imtāᶜ wa-l-muʾānasa*. A. Amīn and A. az-Zayn (eds) (1939–1944) 3 parts (Cairo: Laǧnat at-taʾlīf wa-t-tarǧama wa-n-našr); Kopf, L. (trans.) (1976) 'The Zoological Chapter of the Kitab al-Imtaᶜ wal-Muʾanasa of Abu Hayyan al-Tauhidi (10th century). (Translated from the Arabic and annotated)', in M.M. Goshen-Gottstein (ed.) *Studies in Arabic and Hebrew Lexicography* (Jerusalem: Y.L. Magnes), pp. 47–123.

Timotheus of Gaza: *Peri zoon*. F.S. Bodenheimer and A. Rabinowitz (trans.), (1949) *Timotheus of Gaza on Animals. Peri zoon. Fragments of a Byzantine paraphrase of an animal-book of the 5th Century A.D. Translation, Commentary and Introduction*. Collection de travaux de l'Académie Internationale d'Histoire des Sciences Nr. 3 (Paris: AIHS).

50. Ǧāḥiẓ, *Ḥayawān*, vol. VII, p. 119 ranks the rhinoceros next to the elephant (e.) and the buffalo (b.) among the three most noble, leading wild beasts; Ibn Ḫurradāḏbiḥ, *Masālik*, p. 65: smaller than the e., but huger than the b.; *Aḫbār aṣ-Ṣīn wa-l-Hind*, p. 14: smaller than the e., resembling the b.; Masᶜūdī, *Murūǧ*, vol. I, p. 385: smaller than the e., but bigger than the b.; Idrīsī, *Nuzhat*, p. 75: smaller than the e., but huger than the b.; Mustawfī al-Qazwīnī, *Nuzhat*, p. 25: larger than the b. and smaller than the e. Other authors use only one of these animals for comparison: *Tuḥfat al-ġarāʾib*, p. 123: like a small e.; Šahmardān, *Nuzhat*, p. 54: like the b.; Qazwīnī, *ᶜAǧāʾib*, Cod. arab. 464, fol. 184r, 8: as huge as an e.
51. Cf. von Hees, *Enzyklopädie*, p. 211.
52. For example in Timotheus of Gaza's *Peri Zoon*, p. 44, chapter 45, no. 1.
53. Ǧāḥiẓ, *Ḥayawān*, vol. VII, p. 128.
54. Ǧāḥiẓ, *Ḥayawān*, vol. VII, p. 128: *wa-hāḏā l-qawlu bi-l-ḫurāfati ašbah*.
55. Bonebakker, S.A. (1992) 'Some medieval views on fantastic stories', in *QSA* 10 (1992), p. 24. The tradition goes that Ḫurāfa was a Bedouin who told far-fetched stories, like the German Baron von Münchhausen.
56. *Aḫbār aš-Ṣīn wa-l-Hind*, p. 14; Masᶜūdī, *Murūǧ*, vol. I, p. 385.
57. Timotheus of Gaza, *Peri Zoon*, p. 44, chapter. 45 no. 2.
58. Masᶜūdī, *Murūǧ*, vol. I, pp. 387f.; Ǧāḥiẓ, *Ḥayawān*, vol. VII, pp. 123–125.
59. Tawḥīdī, *Imtāᶜ*, trans. Kopf, p. 83, no. 99.
60. Connections between the scientific literature and the tales about Sindbad the Sailor have been known to researchers for a long time. M. J. De Goeje, the publisher of several geographical texts, pointed out passages from the tale which correspond to the geography written by Ibn Ḫurradāḏbih in the 9th century. Cf. De Goeje, 'De reizen van Sindebaad', pp. 278–312.
61. Bīrūnī, *Hind*, p. 163.
62. Šahmardān, *Nuzhat*, p. 54.
63. Šahmardān, *Nuzhat*, pp. 54f.
64. Hamadānī, *ᶜAǧāʾib*, p. 264.
65. Hamadānī, *ᶜAǧāʾib*, p. 264.
66. See above, footnotes 13–15.
67. Qazwīnī, *ᶜAǧāʾib*, Cod. arab. 464, fol. 184r, 12–14; (the edited text of Qazwīnī, *ᶜAǧāʾib* (Ed. F. Saᶜd), p. 434 differs from the manuscript's text).
68. One must be careful, of course, in drawing conclusions about dependencies, because the material on animal lore is very extensive and as yet not very well-researched. Cf. Kruk, R. (2002) 'Review of Hees, Syrinx von—Enzyklopädie als Spiegel des Weltbildes; Qazwīnīs Wunder der Schöpfung—eine Naturkunde des 13. Jahrhunderts', in *Bibliotheca Orientalis LIX*, 5–6, pp. 650ff.
69. Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, vol. IX, p. 316.
70. Damīrī, *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā*, vol. II, p. 218.
71. Damīrī, *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā*, vol. II, p. 218.
72. Damīrī, *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā*, vol. II, p. 218.
73. Qalqašandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aᶜšā*, vol. II, p. 35.

74. See footnote 20.

75. Von Hees, *Enzyklopädie*, pp. 242–244.

76. Von Hees, *Enzyklopädie* and von Hees, 'Encyclopaedia'.

77. Carra de Vaux, 'Introduction', p. 19f.

78. Fahd, 'Le Merveilleux', p. 119: 'Il y a ... les écrits spécifiquement consacrés à la cueillette des faits merveilleux considérés d'un point de vue assez large, englobant, en particulier, le fabuleux et le fantastique. De ces récits, plus nombreux à l'origine, semble-t-il (footnote: Cf. par ex., sous ʿajāʾib, dans *Kachf az'-z'unūn* de H'ājjī Khalīfa), deux représent des jalons importants dans l'évolution de ce genre: (a) La Tuh'fat al-albāb wa-nukhbat al-aʿjāb d'Abū H'āmid al-Māzinī al-Andalusī al-Gharnāt'ī ...(b) Le K. ʿajāʾib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharāʾib al-majūdāt de Zakariyyā b. Muh'ammad al-Qazwīnī'.

79. G. Fluegel (ed.), (1835–58) *Lexicon Bibliographicum et Encyclopaedicum a Mustafa Ben Abdallah Katib Jelebi dicto et nomine Haji Khalfa celebrato compositum*, 7 vols (London: R. Bentley).

80. Kātib Celebī, *Kašf aẓ-ẓunūn*, vol. IV, pp. 125–131.

81. Kātib Celebī, *Kašf aẓ-ẓunūn*, vol. IV, p. 131.

82. Kātib Celebī, *Kašf aẓ-ẓunūn*, vol. I, pp. 267–269.

83. Kātib Celebī, *Kašf aẓ-ẓunūn*, vol. IV, pp. 185–191.

84. See above, pp 6f.

85. Ḥamāda, Š. (2000) *Muʿğam ʿağāʾib al-luğa* (Beirut: Dār Sādir).

86. See for example: Faḫr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī: *ʿAğāʾib al-Qurʾān*. Ed. (1984) (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya).

87. Abu l-ʿAbbās ad-Dimašqī: *ʿAğāʾib al-madūr fī nawāʾ ib Tamūr*. A.F. al-Ḥimṣī (ed.) (1986) (Beirut: Muʾassasat ar-risāla); Al-Ğabartī: *ʿAğāʾib al-āṯār fī at-tarāğim wa-l-aḫbār*. ʿA.-R. ʿAbd ar-Raḥīm (ed.) (1997–1998) (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya).

88. Cf. Daston and Park, Wonders.

CAME

Manuscript No.	111528
Author	
Editor	
Master	
Publisher	

QUERIES: to be answered by AUTHOR

AUTHOR: The following queries have arisen during the editing of your manuscript. Please answer the queries by marking the requisite corrections at the appropriate positions in the text.

QUERY NO.	QUERY DETAILS	QUERY ANSWERED
1	Author name spelt both as von Hees and Von Hees. Please indicate which is correct	
2	Please update if known	