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Ibn Sayyār al-Warrāq
KITĀB AL-ṬABĪKH

Edited by
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Ibn Sayyār al-Warrāq,

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*The mere smell of cooking
can evoke a whole civilization.*
Fernand Braudel

INTRODUCTION

Among the not too many Arabic manuscripts preserved at the University Library of Helsinki there is one gem, a copy of a cookery manual which according to its half-torn title-page was compiled by the well-known poet Kushājim (d. 350/961 or 360/971):

"Kitāb al-ṭa[bīkh]
fi iṣlāḥ al-aghdiyya al-ma'[kūlāt]
wa-ṭayyib al-aṭ'ima al-[maṣnū'āt]
mimmā ustukhrij min kutub [...]
al-ṭuhāh wa-ma[...]
min mulaḥ al-shi'r f[...]
mimmā 'uniya bi-jam'ihī wa-ta'liḥihī [...]
Kushāj[im]"¹

The leaves of the manuscript measure 165 x 135 mm., and the writing occupies an area approximately 150 x 115 mm. There are mostly 15 or 16 lines per page, written in a fluent scribe's *naskhī*. There are 153 fols, the last one blank; *Kitāb al-ṭabīkh* ends on fol. 151^r, on fols 151^r-152^v are several recipes by different and later hands which have been omitted in the present edition as not pertaining to the original text. The ink is black and the paper, which is a brownish colour, is smooth and thick. The manuscript contains no reference to its scribe nor the date when executed. An educated guess would place it in the 6th/12th or 7th/13th century. There are also no clues to the provenance of the manuscript nor to the route by which it eventually reached the University Library of Helsinki.

It was evident that our manuscript was one of the oldest if not the oldest manual of cookery in Arabic preserved to the present day. Dā'ūd Chelebī had in 1934 published an autograph manuscript written at Baghdad in 623/1226 by the otherwise unknown Shams al-dīn Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Baghdādī (d. 637/1239).² When A.J. Arberry in 1939 published a translation of this *Kitāb al-ṭabīkh*³, he stated that he had had the opportunity of examining an old manuscript of the Bodleian Library,

¹ Cf. Jussi Aro, "Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek zu Helsinki", *Studia Orientalia* 23:3(1958)40f.

² *Kitāb al-ṭabīkh*, Mosul 1934 and Beirut 1964 (ed. by Fakhrī al-Bārūdī). The manuscript in Mosul is not unique; there is a copy of it in the British Museum (Or. 5099), see M.M. Ahsan, *Social life under the Abbasids*, London 1979, p. 77 n. 9.

³ "A Baghdad cookery-book", *Islamic Culture* 13(1939)21-47, 189-214.

Oxford, which was, as he believed, written some time during the 4th/10th century.⁴ Ḥabīb Zayyāt had, in fact, already in 1937 pointed out the importance of this Bodleian manuscript and expressed his belief that it was written during the Abbasid Caliphate.⁵ In 1947 Ḥabīb Zayyāt published the introduction to the manual and its chapter headings.⁶ Another old cookery book, *Kitāb al-wuṣlā ilā al-ḥabīb fī waṣf al-ṭayyibāt wal-ṭīb* compiled in the Ayyubid period possibly by the historian Kamāl al-dīn Ibn al-ʿAdīm (d. 660/1262), was described in 1949 by Maxime Rodinson.⁷

These were thus the three oldest cookery books known to exist: al-Baghdādī's *Kitāb al-ṭabīkh* dating from 1226, Ibn al-ʿAmīd's *Kitāb al-wuṣlā* from ca. 1260, and the somewhat mysterious *Kitāb al-ṭabīkh* of the Bodleian Library, which according to the catalogue was compiled by Abū Muḥammad al-Muẓaffar ibn Naṣr Ibn Sayyār al-Warrāq.⁸ When, in 1978, we received a microfilm of MS. Huntington 187 in the Bodleian Library our surprise was genuine: the Helsinki manuscript ascribed to Kushājim and the Oxford manuscript ascribed to al-Warrāq were one and the same work.⁹

MS. Huntington 187 was purchased by Oxford University from its owner Robert Huntington in 1693. According to information kindly supplied to us by Mr. C. Wakefield, Senior Assistant Librarian, the leaves of the manuscript measure 245 x 160 mm., and the writing occupies an area approximately 215 x 120 mm. The ink is dark brown, lighter in places, and the paper, which is a greyish colour, is smooth and fairly thin. The appearance of the ink and paper suggests that the manuscript was executed probably not later than the 7th/13th century.¹⁰ There are 19 lines per page in a clear and fluent scribe's *naskhī*, and the manuscript consists of 170 fols, the two last ones blank:

"Kitāb al-ṭabīkh wa-iṣlāḥ al-aghdhīya
al-ma'kūlāt wa-ṭayyibat al-aṭʿima al-maṣnūʿāt
mimmā ustukhrij min kutub al-ṭīb wa-alfāz
al-ṭuhāh wa-ahl al-lubb ta'lif Abī Muḥammad
al-Muẓaffar ibn Naṣr Ibn Sayyār al-Warrāq"

Everything thus indicates that our cookery book was compiled in the second half of the 4th/10th century. The tradition of cookery manuals written in Arabic goes, however,

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 30 n. 5.

⁵ "Kitāb al-ṭibākha", *al-Mashriq* 35(1937)370f.

⁶ "Fann al-ṭabīkh wa-iṣlāḥ al-aṭʿima fī al-islām", *al-Mashriq* 45(1947)19-26.

⁷ "Recherches sur les documents arabes relatifs à la cuisine", *Revue des Études Islamiques* 17(1949)95-165, especially 117-158.

⁸ *Bibliothecae Bodleianae codicum manuscriptorum orientalium catalogus* I, Oxford 1787, entry No. 410 of the section Codices manuscripti Arabici.

⁹ When our editing was already complete we received information of a further MS. of this cookery book in Istanbul; personal letter from Dr. David Waines of the University of Lancaster dated 28 January 1986. We hope to be able to return to this manuscript when publishing our translation and copious annotations to al-Warrāq's *Kitāb al-ṭabīkh* as volumes II and III.

¹⁰ Personal letter dated 14 December 1978.

far beyond that; the first manuals appeared, in all likelihood, in the second half of the 8th century AD. The *Fihrist* of al-Nadīm (compiled by the year 380/990 at the latest) enables us to construct the following list of comprehensive guides to cookery as known to him. We have tried to exclude dietary guides as well as treatises of medical and pharmacological interest from this list. Thus, for example, it seemed safe to assume that a treatise like al-Kindī's (d. 252/866 or shortly after) *Risāla fī ṣanaʿa aṭʿima min ghair ʿanāṣiriḥā* (Making of foods from other than their elements)¹¹ had no place in a list of manuals for gourmets and epicures.

1. Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī (779-224/839), poet, professional singer and gourmet; half-brother of Hārūn al-Rashīd, who during the long civil war following Hārūn's death (193/809) became claimant to the Caliphate (202/817-203/819): *Kitāb al-ṭabikh* (Cooked food).¹²
2. Yaḥyā ibn Abī Maṣṣūr al-Mauṣilī (*vivebat* 813-833), astrologer and writer on music; Zoroastrian who became *maulā* of al-Ma'mūn: *Kitāb al-ṭabikh laṭīf* (The delightful book of cooked food).¹³
3. Ibn Māsawaih (777-243/857), the Nestorian physician of Hārūn al-Rashīd and his successors: *Kitāb al-ṭabikh* (Cooked food).¹⁴
4. Ibrāhīm ibn al-ʿAbbās ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṣūl, known as al-Ṣūlī (d. 243/857), poet and government secretary, considered to be one of the Masters of Literary Style: *Kitāb al-ṭabikh* (Cooked food).¹⁵
5. ʿAlī ibn Yaḥyā ibn Abī Maṣṣūr al-Munajjim (d. 275/888), son of No. 2 on our list, "court companion of al-Mutawakkil and not only one of his intimate associates, but the foremost among them. He was attached to him and the caliphs following him [al-Muntaṣir, al-Mustaʿin, al-Muʿtazz, al-Muhtadī] until the time of al-Muʿtamid"¹⁶: *Kitāb al-ṭabikh* (Cooked food).¹⁷

¹¹ al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist* (ed. G. Flügel), Leipzig 1871, p. 259, 261 / *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm* (tr. B. Dodge), New York & London 1970, II:621, 625; al-Qifṭī, *Taʾrīkh al-ḥukamāʾ* (ed. J. Lippert), Leipzig 1903, p. 372.

¹² al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 116, 317/I:254, II:742. In a cookery manual compiled during the Muwaḥḥid dynasty and edited by Ambrosio Huici Miranda as *Kitāb al-ṭabikh fī al-Maghrib wal-Andalus fī ʿaṣr al-Muwaḥḥidīn li-muʿallif majhūl* in *Revista del Instituto de Estudios Islámicos en Madrid IX-X* (1961-1962) 15-256 there is a heading "[min] kitāb al-ṭabkh li-Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī." Some of the recipes might, of course, have their origin in the ninth century, but they have been effectually *maghrib-inized*. See also D. Waines, "A Prince of epicures", *Ur* 3 (1984).

¹³ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 149/I:327.

¹⁴ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 317/II:742. Ibn Māsawaih also wrote a treatise called *Kitāb daʿf ʿaḍar al-agh-dhiya* (Avoiding the harm of nutriments), see *Fihrist* 296/II:696. al-Qifṭī, *Taʾrīkh* does not mention *Kitāb al-ṭabikh* but it has *Kitāb al-agh-dhiya* and *Kitāb iṣlāḥ al-agh-dhiya* (p. 381). Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbāʾ* (ed. Nizār Riḍā), Beirut 1965, p. 255 mentions *Kitāb al-ṭabikh*, *Kitāb fī al-agh-dhiya* and *Kitāb daʿf maḍārr al-agh-dhiya*. A long line of caliphs had their meals only in Ibn Māsawaih's presence (al-Qifṭī, *Taʾrīkh* 380).

¹⁵ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 122, 317/I:267, II:742. Also mentioned in Yāqūt, *Irshād al-arīb ilā maʿrifat al-adīb* (ed. D.S. Margoliouth), London 1923-29, I:277.

¹⁶ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* I:313.

¹⁷ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 143, 317/I:314, II:742. Also mentioned in Yāqūt, *Irshād* V:459, and Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān wa-anbāʾ abnāʾ al-zamān* (ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās), Beirut s.a., III:374.

6. al-Ḥārith ibn Bushkhiz (*vivebat* during the 9th century): **Kitāb al-ṭabikh** (Cooked food).¹⁸
7. Aḥmad ibn al-Ṭayyib al-Sarakhsī, philosopher, tutor and **nadīm** of al-Muṭtaḍid, who had him executed in 286/899: **Kitāb al-ṭabikh** (allafahu ʿalā al-shuhūr wal-ayyām lil-Muṭtaḍid; (Cooked food, which he composed according to months and days for al-Muṭtaḍid).¹⁹
8. Maḥbara, **nadīm** of al-Muṭtaḍid (892-902): **Kitāb al-ṭabikh** (Cooked food).²⁰
9. Naṭṭāḥa, *i.e.* Abū ʿAlī Aḥmad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Anbārī (d. 291/903), Master of Literary Style, poet and secretary: **Kitāb al-ṭabikh** (Cooked food).²¹
10. Ibn Khurdādhbih (d. 300/912), well-known geographer and **nadīm** of al-Muṭtaḥmid: **Kitāb al-ṭabikh** (Cooked food).²²
11. Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (865-313/925), "undoubtedly the greatest individual of [the] medico-culinary tradition"²³: **Kitāb al-ṭabikh** (Cooked food).²⁴
12. Jaḥḥa, *i.e.* Aḥmad ibn Jaʿfar al-Barmakī (839-326[325?]/938), **nadīm**, poet and professional singer: **Kitāb al-ṭabikh laṭīf** (The delightful book of cooked food), and **Kitāb faḍāʾil al-sikbāj** (Excellencies of **sikbāj**).²⁵
13. ʿUbaidallāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Abī Ṭāhir (*vivebat* under al-Muqtadir 295/908-320/932), historian: **Kitāb al-sikbāj wa-faḍāʾiluhā** (**Sikbāj** and its excellencies).²⁶

To this list of cookery manuals provided by al-Nadīm and thus known to exist before the turn of the millennium, we can add the following titles (**kitāb** or **nuskha**) to be found in our own cookery book:

1. Yaḥyā ibn Khālīd al-Barmakī (d. 805), well-known **wazīr** of Hārūn al-Rashīd (fol. 114r).
2. al-Ma'mūn (d. 218/833), caliph (fol. 40r, 49r, 132r, 139r).
3. Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī (fol. 49r, 93v, 116r, 131r).
4. al-Wāthiq (d. 232/847), caliph (fol. 120v, 132r, 139r).
5. Ibn Māsawaih (fol. 140v, 141r, 143v, 144v, 145ff.).

¹⁸ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 317 (B.s.kh.r)/II:742. Ḥabīb Zayyāt, "Fann", *al-Mashriq* 45(1947)16, gives his name after the Egyptian edition of al-Fihrist as Buskhunnar.

¹⁹ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 262, 317/II:628, 742. Also mentioned in al-Qifṭī, *Ta'riḥ* 78.

²⁰ Maxime Rodinson is most probably correct in supposing (*op. cit.* p. 101 + n. 9) that this Maḥbara of al-Fihrist (317/II:742) is the same person as Makhbara al-Nadīm, *i.e.* Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Abī ʿAbbād, who was a **nadīm** of al-Muṭtaḍid (*Fihrist* 60/I:131). Cf. Yāqūt, *Irshād* I:57.

²¹ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 124/I:272. Also mentioned in Yāqūt, *Irshād* I:377.

²² al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 149/I:326.

²³ D. Waines, "The gourmet's physician: Abū Bakr al-Rāzī", *Ur* 3(1985)27.

²⁴ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 317/II:742. Of the more or less dietary manuals the following can be mentioned: **Kitāb daʿc maḍārr al-aghdhīya** (Avoiding the harms of nutriments; al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 301/II:706, al-Qifṭī, *Ta'riḥ* 275; Ibn Abī Uṣāibiʿa, ʿUyūn 426 gives the title as **Kitāb manāfiʿ al-aghdhīya wa-daʿc maḍārruhā** (Benefits of nutriments and avoidance of their harms), and **Kitāb/Risāla fi aṭʿimat al-marḍā** (Foods for the sick; al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 302, 317/II:708, 742, al-Qifṭī, *Ta'riḥ* 276, Ibn Abī Uṣāibiʿa, ʿUyūn 425).

²⁵ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 145, 317/I:319, II:742. Both titles are also mentioned in Yāqūt, *Irshād* I:384.

²⁶ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 147/I:322.

6. Iṣḥāq (ibn) al-Kindī²⁷ (fol. 103^r).
7. al-Muṣṭamid (d. 892), caliph (fol. 49^r).
8. Muḥammad ibn Hārūn²⁸ (fol. 90^v).
9. ʿAbdallāh ibn ʿUmar (fol. 112^v, 114^v).
10. Abū Samīn (fol. 90^r, 98^v).
11. Ibn Dihqānah (fol. 112^v).

The four last-mentioned remain unidentified; Abū Samīn sounds, however, a typical name for a cook. Only two names, Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī and Ibn Māsawaih, are mentioned in both the *Fihrist* and our cookery book. Besides, we should not consider all the caliphs listed above as avid authors of cookery manuals. It is rather a question of their chefs notepads immortalized by the caliphs' names.

The case of Yaḥyā ibn Khālīd al-Barmakī is most interesting. If he really wrote something that could be considered a cookery book – and there are strong reasons to believe this on account of his active interest in, among other things, medicinal plants and perfumes²⁹ – it would be the beginning of this art. Considering the Barmakids Persian background, one of them would have been an ideal candidate for introducing the Persian culinary art into the court at Baghdad. Even a quick glance at the table of contents of our manual will convince us of the magnitude of Persian influence.

To these authors and titles we can still add five to complete, as far as we know, the list of cookery books known to exist in Arabic before the turn of the millennium. We have Aḥmad ibn Abī Yaʿqūb, known as Ibn al-Dāya (d. in either 330/941 or 340/951). He was living in Egypt so his *Kitāb al-ṭabīkh* (Cooked food) may have included more "provincial" recipes than the others. The interesting thing is that Ibn al-Dāya's father had been a secretary of the "Prince of epicures" Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī.³⁰ Then we have another Egyptian, Mūsā ibn al-ʿĀzār (d. 363/973), who was physician to the Fatimid caliph al-Muʿizz. His work was entitled *Kitāb al-Muʿizzī fī al-ṭabīkh*.³¹ We have further Abū ʿAlī Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Manduwaih (d. 372/982) who was a physician in the hospital founded by ʿAḍud al-daula in Baghdad. He also wrote a *Kitāb al-ṭabīkh*.³² And then the well-known historian Abū ʿAlī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Miskawaih who was a high official of the Buwaihid's and a confidant of ʿAḍud al-daula. He must have been active in the second half of the 4th/10th century as he died at an advanced age in 421/1030. His treatise was *Kitāb fī tarkīb al-bājāt min al-aṭʿima aḥkamahu ghāyat al-iḥkām* (wa-atā fihi min uṣūl ʿilm al-ṭabīkh wa-furūʿihi bi-kull gharīb ḥasan).³³

²⁷ MS. Oxford has Iṣḥāq ibn al-Kindī, MS. Helsinki Iṣḥāq al-Kindī; most probably Yaʿqūb ibn Iṣḥāq al-Kindī.

²⁸ Only in MS. Helsinki.

²⁹ al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 317, 325/II:742, 826.

³⁰ Yaʿqūt, *Irshād* II:157-160.

³¹ Ibn Abī Uṣaibiʿa, ʿUyūn 545.

³² al-Qifṭī, *Taʾrīkh* 438. Not mentioned in Ibn Abī Uṣaibiʿa, ʿUyūn, where the nearest corresponding is *Kitāb al-aṭʿima wal-ashriba* (p. 461).

³³ al-Qifṭī, *Taʾrīkh* 332.

The fifth and last one is, of course, our cookery book. In no contemporary or near-contemporary source is there anything indicating that Kushājim had compiled a cookery book. It is only Ḥājī Khalifa (d. 1658) who gives us this piece of information.³⁴ If Kushājim had written a *Kitāb al-ṭabīkh* it most probably would have been taken into consideration in al-Nadīm's, Yāqūt's or Ibn Khallikān's accounts. The authorship of Abū Muḥammad Ibn Sayyār al-Warrāq is problematic as nothing else seems to be known about him. At any rate, there was thus a vast culinary literature to draw upon at the end of the 10th century AD; at least 28 titles seem to have been known to exist at that time.

We have our reasons for giving a short outline of the various authors of these above-mentioned cookery manuals. Would-be caliphs, *wazīrs*, well-known physicians and scholars, Masters of Literary Style, poets and above all *nadīms* of the mighty abound in our list³⁵; writing and compiling cookery books was no pastime for "obscure savants" in the 9th and the first half of the 10th century AD. But, hand in hand with the general, political as well as cultural, decline of the Abbasid dynasty, the quality of cookery books also deteriorated. There seems to have been a gap after the 10th century until we reach the above mentioned cookery manuals of the 13th century. This period of more than two centuries gave birth to only a few treatises.³⁶ After the 10th century the cookery books were no more written by or for the caliphs and their entourage; it became more or less the distraction of obscure scholars for their own benefit.³⁷

In the opinion of the Arabs themselves, al-Rādī (322/934-329/940) "was the last Caliph who at any time had troops and State Property under his personal direction, the last Caliph whose poems were made into a collected edition, the last to read the Sermon and pray in public regularly, the last who ever sat with Table Companions, and the last sovereign whose expenses, charity, and bounties, retinue, stipend and treasury, whose meats and drinks, feasts and household, whose affairs in general were conducted on the scale of the old Caliphate; and he too was the last Caliph who ever rode abroad in garments like those of the Caliphs of time gone by."³⁸

* * *

The change in the Arab "cuisine" following the Islamic conquests in the 7th century AD was rapid and came about as the result of the new life styles, ingredients and cooking techniques introduced from the subdued cultures. For those urbanized in the conquered areas or at least settling down to a sedentarized life, as the bulk of the Arab population out of Arabia were doing, there was no question of selectivity "which absorbs or re-

³⁴ *Kashf al-zunūn ʿan asāmī al-kutub wal-funūn* (ed. G. Flügel), London 1835-58, V:107; (ed. Ş. Yaltkaya & R. Bilge), Istanbul 1941-43, II:1432.

³⁵ On the boon-companion (*nadīm*) and the institution of boon-companionship (*munādama*) see A.G. Chejne, "The boon-companion in early ʿAbbāsīd times", *JAOS* 85(1965)327-335.

³⁶ M. Rodinson, *op. cit.*, 102.

³⁷ M. Rodinson, *op. cit.*, 104.

³⁸ As quoted in E. Schroeder, *Muhammad's people*, Portland 1955, p. 610.

jects foreign imports according to their structural or stylistic compatability."³⁹ To the conquerors it was total submission to the predominant cuisines and an abandonment of the old traditions. This could be considered as surprising because the domain of cooking is in many ways highly conservative⁴⁰, but it is easier to understand when bearing in mind the austere conditions of the Arabian peninsula and the hardships of nomadism, the predominant life style there.

It is hard to imagine a greater difference than the one existing between the eating habits of the Arabs erupting from the peninsula as vanguards of Islam and the haute cuisine of the conquered peoples. During the centuries following the conquests it was the islamicized Persians who, as a part of their pro-Iranian and anti-Arab propaganda, reminded those Muslims who boasted of their pure Arab origin about their, as it was seen, primitive and harsh nomadic barbarism in the not too distant past:

"Is there a messenger, who will carry my message to all the Arabs,
to him among them who is alive and to him who lies hid in the dust?
To say, that I am a man of lineage, lofty above any other one of lineage:
the grandfather in whom I glory was Chosroes, and Sāsān was my father,
Caesar was my uncle, if you ever reckon my ancestry.

[...]

Never did my father sing a camel-song, trailing along behind a scabby camel,
nor approach the colocynth, to pierce it for very hunger;
nor approach the mimosa, to beat down its fruits with a stave;
nor did we roast a skink, with its quivering tail,
nor did I dig for and eat the lizard of the stony ground;

[...]⁴¹

The swiftness of the process of adoption is tellingly revealed in an anecdote preserved by al-Ṭabarī. The conqueror of Egypt, ḲAmr ibn al-ḲĀṣī, wanted to demonstrate to the Egyptians in 20/641 the finality of the conquest by arranging a three-day ostentation of the Arabs' intentions. The invited Egyptians were shown how the Arabs on the first day were having a traditional Arab meal: a camel was slaughtered and its meat was cooked in salted water. The Arabs devoured the meat directly from the pot with their hands and drank the broth. On the second day the Arabs enjoyed Egyptian delicacies

³⁹ "Introduction" in K.C. Chang (ed.), *Food in Chinese culture: anthropological and historical perspectives*, New Haven 1977, p. 7.

⁴⁰ J. Goody, *Cooking, cuisine and class. A study in comparative sociology*, Cambridge 1982, p. 36. This has been well formulated by R. Dubos in his *Celebration of life*, New York 1982, p. 30: "The required mixture of nutrients is [...] an invariant of human nature whereas the kinds of food-stuffs we eat are its sociocultural expressions. That these can take many different forms is illustrated by the fact that cooking recipes are among the most distinctive characteristics of national, regional, social and cultural groups."

⁴¹ This is a poem by Bashshār ibn Burd (95/713-167/783). The translation is by A.F.L. Beeston, *Selections from the poetry of Bassār*, Cambridge 1977, p. 50. The Arabic text is on page 11f. The tone and nuances aside, the facts of Bedouin realities and everyday hardship seem to be correctly conveyed, cf. e.g. the controversial last chapter of al-Jāhiz, *Kitāb al-bukhalā'* (ed. Ṭahā al-Ḥājiri), Cairo 1963, p. 213ff. There is an excellent survey by Maxime Rodinson of the food of the pre-Islamic Arabs in El² s.v. "Ghidhā".

and observed local table manners. The third day was given to a military parade displaying the conquerors' strength. After the parade ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣī condensed the lessons to be taken: "I want you to know that the Arab warrior you saw on the third day has no intention to abandon the life style of the second day to return to the life of the first day."⁴²



⁴² al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wal-mulūk* I:2590-2592; a slightly differing version in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr* (ed. C.C. Torrey), New Haven 1922, p. 60.