Maier’s observation seems a little misleading: Wright’s statement summarizing that development seems much more philologically oriented:

With you [Fleischer], Paris [de Sacy] was the great object of a foreign trip to the young orientalist; with me, Halle [Rödiger] or Leipzig [Fleischer]. Now nearly every one who pleases can visit the East and learn the language on the spot. (ibid., brackets added.)

Moreover, while for most German scholars travel to the East became an option only in the later part of the nineteenth century, the situation was different for the British. There, travel to the East was not that rare. The statement, therefore, places Wright into the German discourse in which the conception of what constitutes proper professional training underwent change. The implications of that change for the British context are, to my mind, still a matter of investigation.

This book is published in a series titled “Arbeitsmaterialien” (study/research material) and thus addresses by definition a relatively small circle of experts. Yet I am not sure that the chosen format is the best possible. In an electronic age there might have been the option of making good scans of all of Wright’s letters available on one website, together with the annotated transcripts provided by Maier. Researchers would benefit from such a website, and even the individual archives stand to gain access to material not otherwise available in their collections. Further, an expanded version of the first, thematic part would make a great book. In its current form, the potential readership seems too narrow. I enjoyed reading the thematic part, but that is probably due to that fact that I am familiar with almost every person mentioned through my own research focusing on biographies of scholars in the German tradition of Oriental studies. As the annotations of the letters in the second part show, Maier did gather information on the people mentioned, and it is possible to find that information via the index, but that makes for rather cumbersome reading. In light of the enormous amount of work and erudition invested in the book, it seems a pity that a great opportunity was missed to address a wider audience.

Ursula Wokoeck
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

ALASTAIR HAMILTON:
_The Arcadian Library. Western Appreciation of Arab and Islamic Civilization._
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The Arcadian Library is, apart from the title of the book under review here, also a library in the literal sense of the word. It has an address in the centre of London, and
when its doors open, which is rarely and by invitation or introduction only, the visitor is led through a number of large rooms with walls covered with luxurious shelving. This library is the dream-come-true of a Levantine banker, who some twenty-five years ago decided to start collecting books that illustrate, in one way or another, “the relationship and the ties that have bound European culture for so many centuries to the neighbouring Arab and Islamic world”. With the antiquarian expertise of Robert Jones he has been able to bring together an astonishingly rich collection of books on travels, history, science and literature concerning the Middle East, and he does not back away from the occasional manuscript. The oldest known copy of the Kitāb al-Mustaʿānî is such a manuscript. It is the object of a volume in the *Studies in the Arcadian Library* which was edited by Charles Burnett in 2008. That manuscript (Arcadian No. 16654, here illustrated on pp. 202–03) was a prize acquired from a London auction house some eight years ago, and in his present work Hamilton mentions more Arcadian manuscripts, yet the strength of the Arcadian Library is clearly in its printed books.

Regrettably this hidden Library is not open to the public, but it compensates for this obvious handicap with a series of publications as magnificently designed as the Arcadian Library itself. The series, *Studies in the Arcadian Library*, is co-published with Oxford University Press and has as its printer’s vignette a lily of the valley. “Under the mulberry trees in the Levant grows the lily of the valley”, is the explanation given (p. 4). The symbolism is obvious: the mulberry tree stands for the silk industry, or up-market industry in general, giving cover to a delicate lily of the valley. The series adds value to the collections of the Arcadian Library because, invaluable as the books of the collection are, if nothing is done with them, they are nothing but old paper. One cannot help thinking of the ḥadīth qudsī, often quoted in Sufi literature: *kuntu kanzan makhfiyyan fa-ahbabtu an u ṭrifā ...* “I was a hidden treasure and I wished to be known ...”.

Alastair Hamilton is, among other things, the author of several volumes of the *Studies in the Arcadian Library*, but in his Arcadian writings the present work is different because of its wide scope and the general approach chosen: Hamilton here gives a synthesis. As travel is best represented in the Arcadian collections it occupies more than one-quarter of the book (pp. 13–143) and is divided into a large number of sections, the one on scientists being by far the longest. The chapter “Turcica” (pp. 144–99) is divided into sections on war and curiosity. The chapters in “Science and medicine” (pp. 200–31) and on Spain (pp. 264–95) have no further division. Then there are chapters on Islam and Christianity (pp. 232–63) and “Oriental scholarship and literature” (pp. 296–360). A bibliography and index conclude the volume. The structure of each chapter is simple: first comes Hamilton’s story on the subjects, whereby he leafs through one book after the other, as it were, and each chapter ends with a generous portfolio.

Several unique or almost unique images are shown. The detail of the map of Cairo by Pagano and Zorzi (p. 14, No. 16422, Venice 1549) remains fascinating. It is the subject of Nicholas Warner’s *The True Description of Cairo*, the second volume in *Studies in the Arcadian Library*. Fragments on parchment of Abū Ma’shar’s *Kitāb al-Milal wal-Duwal*, thought to come from North Africa and estimated to date from the tenth century (pp. 208–09, No. 18076) are also eye-catching.

There are also the predictable items that no collector can afford to miss. David Roberts’ *The Holy Land*, reproduced at several instances in the book, seems a case in point. Roberts’ plates have been reproduced so often that they have lost most of their iconic value, splendid as they are. But the Arcadian Library has two copies of the first edition of 1842–45, one of which seems to be a subscriber’s copy (Nos. 8272, 10177), plus two copies of the 1855 edition (Nos. 12853,
16424), and in addition to that an autographed letter by Roberts’ dragoman (No. 16512). There exist superlative degrees in exclusivity.

Of course one can find inaccuracies in the book. Hamilton’s discourse on Adrian Reland, an important figure in early European Enlightenment (pp. 238–9) was written too hurriedly. Reland’s feat of providing Europe with the first realistically drawn image of the Great Mosque of Mecca does not date from 1705, but from the second edition of his work on Islam (No. 15705, Utrecht 1717). And although the elegant illustrations in Reland’s work are indeed by the engraver Jan Goeree, Reland, who was himself an accomplished artist and cartographer, provided Goeree’s examples. Also the translation history of Reland’s work is rather more complex than Hamilton lets us know.

Even as a synthesis, Hamilton’s Arcadia is not the final word on the collections in that hidden library in the centre of London. When one looks at the tableau de chasse of some thirty manuscripts of the Arabian Nights, dating from the seventeenth century (plate 172, No 16533), the temptation to find out what their relation is to the textus receptus is irresistible. For manuscripts of the Nights, the seventeenth century is relatively old, and here, as well as in other parts of the Arcadian Library, promises for further scholarship and aesthetic pleasure abound.

Jan Just Witkam
Leiden University

SOUTH ASIA

THOMAS R. TRAUTMANN:
India: Brief History of a Civilization.
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This slim paperback volume is intended as a textbook for introductory undergraduate courses in the history of the Indian subcontinent. Responding to the complaints of his University of Michigan students that similar books were “too long, too detailed and had too many names and terms to master for students new to the subject” (p. viii), Trautmann set himself the ambitious task of writing a book that can be read in a few sittings, and yet be comprehensive in coverage, providing a mental map of chronology and terms and giving readers the means to tackle more advanced works. Endeavouring not to sacrifice complexity at the altar of brevity, Trautmann recognizes the thankless nature of his task, commenting that the resulting volume will probably satisfy neither students nor scholars.

The volume is divided into twelve chapters, seven of which deal with the earlier period (c. 2500 BCE–1000 CE). The choice to weight the book in this way is a welcome change from the more familiar privileging of the modern, although it is the medieval period (c. 1000 CE–c.1750) which suffers, being reduced to a single chapter, whilst the modern period (c. 1750 to the present day) is covered in three chapters.

The book commences with a discursive introduction which successively defines the key terms “India”, “Indians” and “Civilization”, followed by a description of the