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Editorial

THÉRÈSE-ANNE DRUART

Islamic philosophy covers a wide range of issues. The study of philosophy in Islamic lands during the Middle Ages included not only Muslim philosophers, but also Christians and Jews. Ongoing philosophical dialogues transcended religious identity, ethnicity, and language. Over the last fifty years, the study of these philosophers has developed substantially. Many original texts in Arabic, Persian, or in their Medieval or Renaissance Latin or Hebrew garb have been edited, and more translations into modern languages have been undertaken. Indeed it is an evolving field in which we are challenged to keep up with the latest scholarship, critical editions, and studies.

For many years, scholars focused on the major figures—al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and Ibn Rushd. Now, for example, we know much more about the long tradition derived from Ibn Sīnā. We are discovering “minor” figures, such as al-Rāzī, the Baghdad Christian school of philosophy, Ibn Miskawayh, Ibn Bājja, and many other philosophers; each helps us to understand the intellectual issues important to that time period. A rediscovery of Mu’tazilī texts, as well as recent understandings of *kalām* have led us to no longer frame *falsafa* in opposition to *kalām*, but rather to see how they were in dialogue and the ways in which they influenced each other. We now also begin to perceive how much Ibn Sīnā influenced not only al-Ghazālī, but also later *kalām*.

Scholars in Medieval Latin philosophy are increasingly aware of the importance of philosophy in Islamic lands and of its originality and creativity. The Oxford University Press Series, Great Medieval Thinkers, has already published a volume on al-Kindī and one on Avicenna is forthcoming. This year, for perhaps the first time, many medieval philosophy departments seek those with an ability to teach Islamic philosophy. There is an increased interest in learning

classical Arabic and an appreciation for the importance of carefully distinguishing between texts in their original languages and their Latin or Hebrew versions.

Yet, despite this progress, we still need more and better editions of the original texts and their Medieval and Renaissance Latin and Hebrew translations. We need more translations in modern languages and these need to be more accessible. Of the new sources in English, *Classical Arabic Philosophy: An Anthology of Sources*, edited by Jon McGinnis and David Reisman (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007), is a great tool for teaching purposes, as is the Islamic Translation Series from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, which provides parallel English–Arabic/Persian texts. We must hope this series continues to publish more volumes. Dare we dream that soon we might have the complete works of Ibn Sīnā and other *falāsifa* in English, as we have the complete works of Aristotle and Plato?

Some well trained young scholars are very productive and full of enthusiasm, while others need encouragement to undertake the linguistic training and the painstaking bibliographical research required for precise and useful work. Hans Daiber, now Emeritus, who published the *Bibliography of Islamic Philosophy* in 1999 and a *Supplement* in 2007, for which we are all so grateful, has retired from this labor intensive enterprise. Scholars in the field must encourage young philosophers and recent PhD students to walk in his footsteps and continue this scholarly tradition.

A Philosopher's Toolkit: A Review Essay

MUHAMMAD HOZIEN

In this review essay we focus on what we call a philosopher's toolkit: a number of books that will help those studying Islamic philosophy texts. These books are both primers on Islamic philosophy, as well as texts that are essential to keep on one's desk or in close reach.

A number of books that are essential in Arabic manuscript research have been published in recent years, three of the most important by Adam Gacek. Of these, two are reviewed here. The first is a supplement to Gacek's book: *The Arabic Manuscript: A Glossary of Technical Terms & Bibliography* (Brill, 2001), and carries the same title, with the addition of *A Supplement* (Brill, 2008). In this supplement, Gacek takes into account much of the research and publication since his first text. He employed a calligrapher to illustrate many of the lacunae that are found in Arabic manuscripts, thus the reader finds a visual guide to the terms defined. In addition, most of the terms are written in Arabic and transliterated.

The terminology defined in the book is essential, as readers must understand these terms to decipher Arabic manuscripts. This, however, does not mean that one can forego a working knowledge of the terminology of the material one is working on. Further, when one is working on texts that deal with philosophy, one should also be cognizant of the terminology of theologians and grammarians. This is a minimum requirement to access such works in a rough state. These three works by Adam Gacek are thus indispensable for students of Arabic manuscripts and those working with such manuscripts.

A second book, which followed the publication of the supplement, is the vademecum; this should be considered a primary text for anyone making their way through the world of manuscripts. It is not a step-by-step guide, but a helpful tool to be consulted on all matters related to Arabic manuscripts. Entitled *Arabic Manuscripts: A*

Vademecum for Readers (Brill, 2009), it is a treasure trove of information, coherently organized in alphabetical order. The introduction lays out important recently published works in the field of Arabic manuscript research. Perhaps the most helpful feature of the book is the extensive color illustrations; these examples are essential to an understanding of the topic. The author and publisher have spared no expense in producing this work, which is a significant contribution to this budding field. The author also explains many of the abbreviations, notations, and shorthand that are a feature of Arabic manuscripts; these appear in illustrations as well as in tables that include the Arabic and English transliteration. Next is a selective and up to date bibliography. It is not meant to be comprehensive, but serves as a list of the important works in the field. The book also has a helpful index.

Another noteworthy book is Sheila Blair's *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh University Press, 2006). This impressive tome offers illustrations of Arabic calligraphy, presenting a detailed historical account of the topic, and numerous examples that elucidate the ways in which Arabic calligraphy has been used in a variety of mediums, from paper to carpets, ceramics and metalworks to buildings. Although the focus of the book is on the artistic aspects of Islamic calligraphy, it proves to be a useful book for anyone interested in the written form.

On Qur'ān and Hadīth

The following set of books is essential for those navigating the Qur'ān and *Hadīth*. The first is the *Dictionary of Qur'anic Usage* by Elsaid Badawi and Muhammad Abdel Haleem (Brill, 2008). The present volume is number 85 of the HDO series; printed on regular stock paper in the standard size of the series, the work is quite heavy and almost difficult to handle physically. With that aside, it is an amazing contribution to Qur'ānic studies. For the casual user who wants to better understand a word that is mentioned in the Qur'ān, to the experienced scholar, this is *the* book to consult in English. The book contains a helpful introduction that surveys the dictionaries of the Qur'ān in English and mentions relevant observations on previous works. This sets the stage for the text, which is not comprehensive, i.e., going into every term and its possible meaning, but contains just enough information to inform the reader of the modes and

references of each of the terms under consideration. The text is arranged in alphabetical order by the trilateral root of the Arabic word. Fortunately for the reader, the word is written in Arabic and transliterated into English. A translation of and reference to the verses is also included, illustrating the benefit of modern multilingual typesetting techniques that allow the Arabic text to be included with the English text. While one may be bothered by the choice of Arabic typeface, a rather boring *naskh*, ultimately this is a brilliant work and a milestone in the field of Qur'ānic studies. It will certainly become a classic reference, useful for many years to come.

Next in the series is a book on *hadīth*, the *Encyclopedia of Canonical Hadīth* by G. H. A. Juynboll (Brill, 2007). This book is billed as a volume that contains all the *hadīth* in the major collections, with minimal repetition and includes the full text of the *hadīth*. Juynboll has written much on the subject of *hadīth*, and this work follows his basic idea on the topic, that is, his view that none of these texts were handed down from people who actually heard and narrated them from people who met, heard, saw, or had been with the prophet Muhammad. Basically, he is of the opinion that all *hadīths* are forgeries. This book is a product of his work with one book, *Tuhfat al-ashrāf* by al-Mizzī (d. 742/1341), which is an index of a portion of the body of *hadīth*. The book is organized by what the author calls a “common link,” which can either be of an early generation, i.e., a companion (*sahābi*) who heard it from the Prophet or a later generation successor (*tābi'i*). This is important from the author's standpoint, as he attempts to narrow the time period when the transmission flourished, to pinpoint the source of the fabrication, leading to his conclusion that only a handful of people fabricated the entire *hadīth* corpus.

The biographies of each of the common links are mentioned, sometimes briefly, as with 'Alī b. Zayd b. Judān, who is given one short paragraph on page 76 and the *hadīth* he narrated on page 77; or in detail, as with A'mash, whose biography spans 3 columns on pages 78–79 and the *hadīth* he narrated covers pages 79–126 and includes 3 diagrams, depending on the narrators and number of narrations included in the collection. The book also includes many diagrams and narration trees that show how the narrations flow outward from the common link.

The book, when used as an aid to finding a *hadīth*, can be either easy or painfully frustrating, depending on whether or not one knows the narrator, as it is organized by narrator. Given that *hadīth* generally touch on many subjects, one might be at a loss as to where to find a particular *hadīth* that may be indexed under another subject. Fortunately, one can still rely on the nine-volume concordance of *hadīth* in Arabic.

Jonathan Brown's work on the *hadīth* collections of Bukhārī and Muslim, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim* (Brill, 2007), concentrates on these two collections of *hadīth*. Brown goes into some detail on these books and how they came to be canonical texts. It is of particular interest to those concerned with Islamic intellectual history and its formation in the premodern age. The work is useful to students of philosophy, for indeed certain works of the Islamic philosophy tradition have followed a similar path, albeit limited in scope and with a narrower audience in comparison to *hadīth* studies.

General Books on Islamic Philosophy

Over the last few years we have seen an active academic interest in Islamic philosophy, and this has been translated into the publication of important texts on the subject. First is a recent work by the erudite philosopher, Seyyed Hossein Nasr: *Islamic Philosophy from its Origins to the Present* (State University of New York Press, 2006). Nasr, an institution in the field with a unique perspective, firmly situates Islamic philosophy with its roots in creed and theology, then quickly moves on to the study of central concepts. He then examines its history and focuses on lesser known figures in the field, and its manifestations in the Islamic East. Nasr's important perspective serves as a reminder of the significance of Islamic philosophy, its historical foundations, its role in the contemporary world, and its vision toward the future.

The Cambridge Companion guides have been an outstanding series to introduce and focus attention on specific subjects in philosophy. The volume entitled *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, edited by Peter Adamson and Richard Taylor (Columbia University Press, 2005) is an excellent survey of the field with articles by leading experts. We would like to see more from these editors and the contributors to this volume. An equally good companion to this is *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*,

edited by T. J. Winter (Columbia University Press, 2008). In this book, Winter has assembled a collection of articles on a range of theological topics. While at times topics in the field of theology and philosophy may not be well differentiated, when the barrier blurs, these volumes serve as bookends to the disciplines.

With these boundaries in mind, the next book in our survey is Ayman Shihadeh's *Sufism and Theology* (Edinburgh University Press, 2007). Interestingly, Shihadeh, a leading expert on the the encyclopedic scholar Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209), is a contributor to the volumes in the Cambridge series on theology and Arabic philosophy. *Sufism and Theology* is a volume of papers that were presented at a conference hosted by Edinburgh University and edited by Shihadeh.

Next in our survey is Peter Groff's *Islamic Philosophy A-Z* (Edinburgh University Press, 2007), a volume of the philosophy A-Z series, which is a cross between a dictionary and an alphabetical listing of subjects related to the discipline; it is a handy reference guide. Massimo Campanini's volume, *An Introduction to Islamic Philosophy* (Edinburgh University Press, 2008), written by one of the journal's editors, originally in Italian, is a solid introduction to the field.

These books will serve well in courses on Islamic philosophy, theology, or Sufism, as they present the reader with a quick guide to both ideas and philosophers. These can also work as companion volumes to courses devoted to Islamic philosophy, particularly when coupled with the Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy series volume entitled *Medieval Islamic Philosophical Writings*, edited by Muhammad Khalidi (Cambridge University Press, 2005), which presents basic texts that are found in many other collections.

For upper level or more advanced courses, one should, indeed, must now use the book in the field, *Classical Arabic Philosophy*, edited by Jon McGinnis and David Reisman (Hackett, 2007). This book is sure to become a classic in the field, and will replace the *Medieval Political Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, edited by Ralph Lerner and Muhsin Mahdi (Cornell University Press, 1963) that was widely used until now. This book presents sections of important texts from the major philosophers that have written in Arabic. In *Classical Arabic Philosophy*, these texts have been retranslated or edited, some published in English for the first time. The editors are to be

congratulated on this work, as it serves as an important milestone in the study of Islamic philosophy in English. We commend Hackett for publishing such an important work, though we wish they had not limited the margins to such an extent; it is thus a bit difficult to read, though if used by young students with good eyes it should not be an issue. The book is also available in an e-book format.

McGinnis and Reisman's book, together with the translations by Michael Marmura, and perhaps the forthcoming translation of al-Kindī's works (currently being prepared by Adamson) will surely increase the number of texts available to philosophers and scholars with limited language skills. Now we have the opportunity to examine this rich heritage. Perhaps what the student of Islamic philosophy needs now is not more anthologies, but more translations and studies focusing on particular philosophers.

The late Professor Marmura has done an admirable job of translating al-Ghazālī's *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, as well as Ibn Sīnā's *al-Shifā'* (*The Metaphysics*). But Ibn Sīnā has many other works deserving of such attention; one wonders why his *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt* [Remarks and admonitions] has not been completed. Furthermore, his one-volume summary, *al-Najāt* [Salvation] has not received any attention from scholars since Rahman's partial translation and Arabic edition in 1952. In lieu of translating the same texts over and over again, one wonders why more efforts are not made to break new ground. How many translations are needed of Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy b. Yaqzān*, or al-Ghazālī's *Munqidh min al-dalāl*, while many of al-Ghazālī's other philosophical texts await such scholarly attention. Even his major theological work, *al-Iqtisād fi-l-‘itiqād* till today remains untranslated, nearly fifty years after the publication of a critical edition in Arabic. The same can be said of Ibn Sīnā, whose work *al-Shifā'* has been published in excellent editions from the late 1950s on. Islamic philosophy is an open and rich field; plenty of work awaits the attention of enterprising and ambitious young scholars.



JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY

CALL FOR PAPERS

The *Journal of Islamic Philosophy* is published annually; submission deadlines are January 15 and June 15. The journal is interested in papers on ancient and modern Islamic philosophical topics; it cannot consider more general works on modern Islamic affairs, rather its sole focus is philosophy. The paper should present a central argument and contain rebuttals to reasonable refutations of the argument. Studies of the classical philosophers of Islam in the context of modern Western philosophy are especially encouraged.

Guidelines

- Please include a 100- to 150-word abstract and a brief biographical statement.
- Papers should not exceed 15,000 words.
- Please include complete citations in the form of embedded footnotes (*no reference lists or bibliographies are needed*).
- The journal is published in English.
- The *Journal of Islamic Philosophy* reserves the right to make necessary editorial and design changes prior to publication.
- Please see the website for details on formatting and use of diacritics.

Submission

Papers may be submitted via email to editor@muslimphilosophy.com in MS Word (.doc) or (.rtf) format only. For more information on the journal style guide, please contact the editor, or see www.muslimphilosophy.com/journal/cfp.html.