

# Studia graeco-arabica

6



2016

### *Editorial Board*

Mohammad Ali Amir Moezzi, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris  
Carmela Baffioni, Istituto Universitario Orientale, Napoli  
Sebastian Brock, Oriental Institute, Oxford  
Charles Burnett, The Warburg Institute, London  
Hans Daiber, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a. M.  
Cristina D'Ancona, Università di Pisa  
Thérèse-Anne Druart, The Catholic University of America, Washington  
Gerhard Endress, Ruhr-Universität Bochum  
Richard Goulet, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris  
Steven Harvey, Bar-Ilan University, Jerusalem  
Henri Hugonnard-Roche, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris  
Remke Kruk, Universiteit Leiden  
Concetta Luna, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa  
Alain-Philippe Segonds (†)  
Richard C. Taylor, Marquette University, Milwaukee (WI)

Staff: Elisa Coda, Cristina D'Ancona, Cleophea Ferrari, Issam Marjani, Cecilia Martini Bonadeo.

### *Submissions*

Submissions are invited in every area of the studies on the transmission of philosophical and scientific texts from Classical Antiquity to the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and early modern times. Papers in English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish are published. Prospect authors are invited to check the *Guidelines* on the website of the journal, and to address their proposals to the Editor in chief.

### *Peer Review Criteria*

*Studia graeco-arabica* follows a double-blind peer review process. Authors should avoid putting their names in headers or footers or refer to themselves in the body or notes of the article; the title and abstract alone should appear on the first page of the submitted article. All submitted articles are read by the editorial staff. Manuscripts judged to be of potential interest to our readership are sent for formal review to at least one reviewer. *Studia graeco-arabica* does not release referees' identities to authors or to other reviewers. The journal is committed to rapid editorial decisions.

Web site: <http://learningroads.cfs.unipi.it>

Service Provider: Università di Pisa, ICT - Servizi di Rete Ateneo

ISSN 2239-012X (Online)

Registration at the law court of Pisa, 18/12, November 23, 2012.

Editor in chief Cristina D'Ancona ([cristina.dancona@unipi.it](mailto:cristina.dancona@unipi.it))

Mailing address: Dipartimento di Civiltà e Forme del Sapere, via Pasquale Paoli 15, 56126 Pisa, Italia.

© Copyright 2016 by Industrie Grafiche Pacini Editore, Pisa.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the Publisher. The Publisher remains at the disposal of the rightholders, and is ready to make up for unintentional omissions. *Studia graeco-arabica* cannot be held responsible for the scientific opinions of the authors publishing in it.

### *Cover*

Mašhad, Kitābhāna-i Āsitān-i Quds-i Raḍawī 300, f. 1v  
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, *grec* 1853, f. 186v

states that motion is possible only by contact, and refutes the idea of propagation. Chapter 5 (pp. 51-70) deals with the epistemological premises of Gersonides' account of the physical universe and describes them in terms of "empiricism", thus paving the way to Chapter 6 (pp. 71-79), entitled "Metaphysics: doubts and reservations". The book ends with two chapters on astronomical issues: rays and the theory of vision (Chapter 7, pp. 82-98), and the place of doubt in astronomy (Chapter 8, pp. 99-103). From all this, Glasner reaches the conclusion that Gersonides "turned his back on metaphysics at the end of the early period" – namely, around 1325 (p. 16), then "gradually detached himself from the Aristotelian natural sciences during the middle period" – namely 1325-1328 – "and focused almost exclusively on the applied mathematical sciences in the late period" (p. 106). A general index, including both authors and concepts, completes the book.

EC

Ch.H. Manekin - Y.T. Langermann - H.H. Biesterfeldt (eds.), *Moritz Steinschneider. The Hebrew Translations of the Middle Ages and the Jews as Transmitters*. Vol. I. Preface. General Remarks. Jewish Philosophers, Springer, Dordrecht - Heidelberg - New York - London 2013 (Amsterdam Studies in Jewish Philosophy, 16), 255 pp.

As the Editors state in their Preface (pp. 1-5), and elaborate further in their Introduction ("The Genesis of *Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters*", pp. 7-36), this volume inaugurates a "larger project to translate, update, and revise, in short, to transform *HUe* for the modern reader" (p. 3). *HUe* stands for *Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher*, one of the two masterpieces by Moritz Steinschneider (1816-1907), the other being his *Die arabische Übersetzungen aus dem Griechischen*, namely the collection of several long inventories on the transmission of scientific and philosophical works to the Arabic-speaking world published between 1889 and 1896 on the journals *Beihefte zum Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, *Zeitschrift für Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, and *Archiv für pathologische Anatomie und Physiologie und für klinische Medizin*.

Published in 1893, *HUe* is admittedly "a work of gargantuan proportions [...] spanning over a thousand pages of closely-set type, and including approximately seven thousand footnotes. Even the long title fails to describe adequately the work's contents. For Steinschneider expanded the story of the medieval Hebrew translations and their authors to include information about all types of Hebrew adaptations, versions, commentaries, supercommentaries, etc., that pertain to philosophy, science, medicine, and belles-lettres, as well as bio-bibliographical information about their authors" (p. 1). Thus, it comes as no surprise that the Editors, in their endeavour to put at the disposal of contemporary scholarship such a wealth of information of all kinds, had to make some choices. Here is how they account for their decision: "*HUe*'s comprehensiveness and the slow but steady progress in the field, suggests that the best way to deal with ongoing research is not by replacing Steinschneider's masterpiece, but by reworking and updating it. [...] The present work is itself a *Bearbeitung*, a version or adaptation, of the section of *HUe* devoted to the Hebrew translations of Judaeo-Arabic philosophy" (p. 3). As such, it counts as "the first part of our larger project to translate, update, and revise, in short to transform, *HUe* for the modern reader" (*ibid.*).

The subdivision of the task among the three authors is presented at p. 4. Having thus stated the overall scope of their work, they move on to describe the background and steps of Steinschneider's project. This is a very interesting excursus, that includes information on the works that inspired him: Wüstenfeld's *Geschichte der Arabischen Ärzte* (1840), Flügel's *Dissertatio de arabicis scriptorum graecorum interpretibus* (1841), and Wenrich's *De auctorum Graecorum versionibus et commentariis*

*Syriacis, Arabicis, Armeniacis Persicisque commentatio* (1842). Information is given also on the preparatory essays published before he submitted his *magnum opus* to the Académie Française, that in 1884 had launched a prize competition for the best work on Hebrew translations in the Middle Ages. It took forty years for Steinschneider to collect the data, from his early project to the submission to the Académie Française (pp. 14-18). The Introduction ends with historical details of great interest, and a portrait of Steinschneider's intellectual profile.

The part of *HUe* translated and updated in this volume is comprised of three introductory items: (i) Steinschneider's Introduction to the *Mémoire*, written in French, which was submitted in December 1884 to the Académie Française (pp. 37-42), (ii) the Preface to *HUe* (pp. 43-50), and (iii) its "General Remarks" (pp. 51-67). Then the translation of the part on Jewish philosophers comes (pp. 68-230), accompanied by an Appendix ("Conspectus of the Contents of *Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters*", pp. 231-42). The Index of manuscripts (pp. 243-6) and a General Index (pp. 247-55) concludes this first issue of a painstaking, erudite work that deserves the gratitude of all those interested in the transmission of knowledge from Antiquity to the Middle Ages and beyond.

EC

Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century. Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 2015, xvi+399 pp.

For a long time, the intellectual life of the Islamic world in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was considered of little interest and typical of an age of stagnation and decline; in particular, as regards the Ottoman area, this epoch is commonly represented as the beginning of a long period of obscurantism and negative attitudes toward whatever original cultural phenomenon under the pressure of *taqlid* (uncritical imitation of the predecessors). Khaled El-Rouayheb's book is the first concrete attempt to investigate some of the intellectual currents of this period, in an area stretching from Anatolia to North Africa. The focus is on the intellectual outcome of the learned '*ulamā*' (treatises, commentaries, *marginalia*, etc.), in order to grasp the main trends in the exchange of ideas and transfer of knowledge within the geopolitical milieu of the Ottoman Empire. The book falls into three main parts, each devoted to a movement of ideas, so to speak: Part I, "The Path of the Kurdish and Persian Verifying Scholars", is comprised of Chapters 1-3, and deals with the "westward movement"; Part II, "Saving Servants from the Yoke of Imitation", is comprised of Chapters 4-6, and focuses on the eastward movement from the Maghreb towards the capital of the Ottoman empire; finally, Part III, "The Imams of Those who Proclaim the Unity of Existence", is comprised of Chapters 7-9, and is devoted to the spread of the influence of Sufi orders in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The overarching concern of this book is to deconstruct what El-Rouayheb calls "the myth of the triumph of fanaticism" (p. 14 and 348), namely the widespread idea that starting from the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century no more space was left in the Ottoman domain for the study of philosophy and the "rational sciences". This is done especially in Chapter 1, "Kurdish Scholars and the Reinvigoration of the Rational Sciences" (pp. 13-59), not without discussing the hostility to all rational sciences of the puritan movement initiated by Meḥmed Kāḏızade toward the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The famous scholar and librarian Kātib Çelebī complained on the sciences that sank into oblivion because of the increasing influence of the Kāḏızadelīs; despite this, El-Rouayheb shows through a careful prosopographical analysis that during this period in the Ottoman world the study of philosophical and religious disciplines such as logic, theology and textual criticism has continued uninterruptedly and vigorously, and this especially in the Maghreb, Hejaz, and in the Kurdish provinces of the Empire. It is from these provincial areas