# Studia graeco-arabica

8

2018

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*Subscription orders*
Information on subscription rates for the print edition of Volume 8 (2018), claims and customer service: redazione@pacinieditore.it

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

*Book Announcements & Reviews*

*Siglas*

CDA – Cristina D'Ancona
EC – Elisa Coda
GM – Giovanni Mandolino
MZ – Marianna Zarantonello
VK – Veysel Kaya

Byzantine philosophers should be seen as advocates of a widespread kind of eclecticism". Second, "the works of the Byzantine thinkers were firmly and deeply embedded in their Christian faith" (p. 321). The second part of the paper is devoted to the figure of the Byzantine philosopher. "The Byzantines were not professional philosophers in the way their counterparts were in Late Antiquity. Byzantine philosophers taught philosophy, and thus they were scholars and commentators, but they were at the same time high officials, clerics, monks and even patriarchs" (p. 325). George Tornikes' funeral oration for the princess Anna Komnena, discussed at pp. 326-7, provides a good example of the different ways of philosophical life in Byzantium at that time. Then, Nikephoros Blemmydes (1197-1272) is presented as an instance of the "dual character of the learned scholar and the ascetic monk" (p. 327), notwithstanding the "weird and strange events" he narrates in his autobiography. To three of these events Ierodiakoniou devotes a commentary which includes a comparison with Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*.

In her "'Die beste Religion gleicht der Philosophie': Der Philosophiebegriff im arabisch-islamischen Mittelalter im Streit zwischen Ratio und Offenbarung" (pp. 337-54) C. Ferrari starts with al-Tawḥīdī's *Kitāb al-Imtāʿ wa-l-muʾānasa*, a report on the gatherings of a learned circle of 10th-century Baghdad. The topic of the relationship between religion and philosophy was raised more than once in these evening talks, and this is especially interesting in view of the fact that the gatherings were hosted by a vizier, Ibn Sadʿān. The period was characterised by political and intellectual struggles: "Traditionalisten bekämpften Rationalisten, zwischen Schia und Sunna gab es Konflikte, unter Juristen, Grammatikern und Philosophen gab es Auseinandersetzungen um die Deutungshoheit" (p. 337). Surprisingly enough, it is the spokeperson of the philosophers, the reputed leader of the Aristotelian circle of the time Abū Sulaymān al-Siǧistānī, who voiced a critique of the co-mixing between religion and philosophy: he "wendet sich (...) mit scharfen Worten gegen die Möglichkeit einer Synthese von Religion und Philosophie (...). Abū Sulaimān, flankiert von dem Juristen al-Ǧarīrī, wendet sich nicht nur gegen die Iḫwān aṣ-Ṣafāʾ, die 'Brüder im reinen Glauben', die der militanten Häresie der Ismāʿīlīya nahestanden, sondern auch gegen andere Zeitgenossen, Zeugen des arabischen Platonismus, die gleichfalls die Idee einer Vereinbarkeit von Philosophie und islamischer Religion propagiert" (p. 338). After having outlined the rise of Graeco-Arabic philosophy in the formative period of the translations of the 9th century, Ferrari focuses on al-Kindī. His harsh criticism of speculative theology (*Kalām*) coexists with the idea that philosophy reaches the same truth as revelation, with the difference that for philosophy to raise the human effort by trial and error is necessary, while prophecy provides immediate intuition of the truth. With al-Fārābī, on the contrary, "hat die Philosophie das Primat der Erkenntnis. Trotzdem is es die sunnitisch-islamische Herrschaftsform, auf deren Grundlage die Lebensweise beruht, die das Ziel jedes Gemeinswesen sein sollte" (p. 353).

Ch. Riedweg, "Zusammenfassung und Ausblick" (pp. 355-60), concludes this survey of the omnipresence of philosophy in Late Antiquity. "Tatsächlich gibt es kaum ein Autor der Kaiserzeit und Spätantike, bei dem sich nicht zumindest Spuren von platonisch-philosophischem Gedankengut finden lassen. Selbst in Fällen radikaler Exklusion is stets ein mehr oder weniger starke Partizipation an griechisch-römisch philosophoumena bzw. am philosophischen 'structural skeleton' zu erkennen" (p. 359). Indexes of passages, names, and topics complete a rich and interesting volume.

CDA

R.C. Taylor - L.X. López-Farjeat (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Islamic Philosophy*, Routledge, London - New York 2016, XVII + 433 pp.

As the Editors highlight at the outset of their Introduction (pp. 1-3), this collection of thirty-three short essays aims at illustrating all the aspects of Islamic philosophy as "philosophy in its own right", i.e. neither as a subset of Oriental studies nor as later developments of Greek thought (p. 1). The systematic approach favoured by Taylor and López-Farjeat does not prevent them from setting also some chronological boundaries for the volume: the Classical (roughly speaking, between 850 and 1200 A.D.) and post-Classical periods. Hence, only seldom authors later than Averroes are taken into account (see below the papers by M. Elkaisy-Friemuth, C. Bonmariage, and M. Rustom). Preference is given to Sunni Islam: a fact that, together with the chronological boundaries just mentioned, helps explaining why the section on mysticism is shorter than it might have been if šīʿite thought of the post-Classical age, with its overwhelming interest in theosophy, had been taken into account.

The topics are organised according to a slightly modified Aristotelian model, in the wake of the traditional organisation of the corpus from logic to physics, to metaphysics and eventually to ethics, with its political subset. This sequence is modified with the effect of having what we label nowadays 'philosophy of mind' placed after metaphysics. The whole treatment of philosophical issues is supplemented by prolegomena on the credal background of Islamic philosophy (Part I) and an appendix on mysticism (Part VII).

Part I, devoted to *Philosophical issues in Islamic Revelation and Theology*, opens the volume. M. Elkaisy-Friemuth, "God and Creation in al-Rāzī's Commentary on the Qurʾān" (pp. 7-19) presents the doctrine of creation elaborated by the ašʿarite theologian Faḫr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209-1210) under the influence of the Avicennian topic of the first principle as *necesse esse*. After an analysis of al-Rāzī's exegeses of the narratives of the creation of the cosmos and man in the Qurʾān, Elkaisy-Friemuth concludes her account of the doctrines of this author – appropriately labelled later on in the volume as a "highly-Avicennised philosophical theologian" (Shihadeh, p. 421) – with the remark that "rather than philosophizing the Qurʾān, he Islamized philosophy" (p. 19). R.W. Gwinne, "Reasoning in the Qurʾān" (pp. 20-30), focuses on al-Ġazālī's *Just Balance* (*al-Qisṭās al-mustaqīm*), in which al-Ġazālī's detects five types of argument present in the revealed speech. These "are the equivalents of the first, second and third figures of the Aristotelian categorical syllogism, and the Stoic conditional and disjunctive syllogisms" (p. 20). A. Nanji, "Ethical Issues in the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth" (pp. 31-41), points to the fact that philosophy, influent as it might have been on the ethical thinking of the Muslim philosophers and theologians, "did not significantly affect the development of ethical definitions grounded in religious texts and interpretations" (p. 31). This paper is devoted to present the Muslim faith in a way that might be palatable for a contemporary audience. With the essay by T. Mayer, "Human Reason in Islamic Theology" (pp. 42-56) we move on towards the analysis of the overarching structure of Muslim theology. After having outlined the divide between Muʿtazilism and Ašʿarism, Mayer focuses on al-Ġazālī and his "ways to take up Avicennian cosmological framework in practice, while still cleaving to the occasionalist worldview in principle" (p. 54). Mayer points to an interesting epistemological implication of this stance. "In principle, God's absolute power makes many quite different sequences of events possible. But the world tends always to have predictable cause-effect patterns, based not on any intrinsic necessity, but through God's choice to recreate it in that way. This creational habitus has a direct epistemic aspect: it is by God's custom, not otherwise, that acquired knowledge arises within us through discursive reason" (p. 55). Finally, R. Ahmed, "Jurisprudence and Political Philosophy in Medieval Islam" (pp. 57-66) argues for a substantial "disconnection between jurisrprudence in theory and actual practice" (p. 58) in view of presenting Islamic political philosophy as an aspirational doctrine that, similar in this to jurisprudence, "developed theories for how a virtuous regime should function" (p. 65), without however any direct impact on how historical Muslim societies and states developed.

Part II, *Logic, Language, and the Stucture of Science*, contains four papers and opens with "Logic and Language" by Th.-A. Druart (pp. 69-81). The relationship between logic with its claim for universality and the linguistic arts on the one hand, theology on the other, remained tense. Against this background, Druart's essay describes the internal development of Arabic philosophical logic from al-Fārābī to Avicenna and pays attention also to the philosophical reflections on language, with a special focus on al-Fārābī. Against the background of "the Arabic grammarians' contempt for logic" (p. 71) as a discipline that claims for universality while being nothing more than the grammar of the Greek language, al-Fārābī makes two decisive moves. First, he "strongly contrasts the particularity of grammar for each language to the universality of logic" (*ibid.*). Second, he emphasises the idea that "the various languages develop by convention. (...) Al-Fārābī' explanation of the development of language clearly implies that language is not of divine origin" (p. 76). Coupled with his realist theory of knowledge as far as "first intelligibles" are concerned – namely those which are common to all human intellects, irrespective of the way they are named in the natural languages – this doctrine envisions a theory of knowledge that was bound to strongly influence the subsequent developments of the philosophy of language in the Muslim world. T. Kleven, "Rhetoric, Poetics, and the Organon" (pp. 82-92) analyses the arguments with which al-Fārābī and Averroes included Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* within the scope of logic. The obvious reason that comes to mind is that scholarship in Greek Late Antiquity did so, but for Kleven the reasons advanced by the two Islamic thinkers go beyond this heritage. Both point specifically to the fact that rhetoric and poetics are intended to convince the audience that "certain generally accepted and unexamined

notions are more rational than others" (p. 91). Thus, rhetoric and poetics are part and parcel of a theory of language whose natural place is logic. A. Bäck, "Demonstration and Dialectic in Islamic Philosophy" (pp. 93-104) outlines the reception of Aristotelian logic and the theory of demonstration in al-Fārābī, Avicenna, and Averroes, pointing to intellectual intuition of the first intelligibles as to the typical feature of this reception. While dialectical thinking is helpful in the preliminary stages of knowledge, Avicenna and Averroes "found the intellect's apprehension of intelligibles in one way or another to be the foundation for the premises of scientific demonstration" (p. 101). To conclude this part, A. Akasoy and A. Fidora offer a paper on "The Structure and Methods of the Sciences" (pp. 105-14). From al-Kindī's *Epistle on the Quantity of Aristotle's Books* to al-Fārābī's *Enumeration of the Sciences*, the Late Antique model of the organisation of knowledge was inspiring for Muslim philosophers. However, according to Akasoy and Fidora the classifications by al-Kindī and al-Fārābī "substantially enlarge the scope of the late antique Prolegomena so as to embrace different and new forms of knowledge" (p. 108). Subsequently, Avicenna and Averroes developed their theory of science on the basis of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*.

Part III, *Philosophy in the Natural Sciences*, deals with cosmology. The paper by J. McGinnis, "The Establishment of the Principles of Natural Philosophy" (pp. 117-30) outlines the basic description of the cosmos that was shared both by philosophers and theologians. A finite cosmos, spherical in form and hosting two kinds of movement – the circular rotations of the heavens and the rectilinear motion of the sublunar realm – reflects the Aristotelian origin of this cosmology. On the issue of nature, theologians parted company with philosophers. Following in Aristotle's footsteps, the philosophers asserted the existence of natural laws; in the theological camp, from al-Bāqillānī to al-Ġazālī, this conviction was challenged especially apropos causal connections. The structure of physical reality, the question of the *minima naturalia* and the different approach of philosophers and theologians to matter, form, and natural causation are also discussed. The interaction of the Neoplatonic and Aristotelian notions of 'cause' in Avicenna forms the focus of the essay by L.X. López-Farjeat, "Causality in Islamic Philosophy" (pp. 131-40). The Neoplatonic flow of the multiplicity of derived beings from the One and the Aristotelian efficient causality, enlarged to mean 'the cause of existence', are combined in Avicenna's account. To this, al-Ġazālī reacts: "while al-Ghazālī conceives God as a completely free agent in regard to all things, Ibn Sīnā identifies God with eternal unchanging and determinate efficient causality" (p. 137). The subsequent paper by C. Cerami, "The Eternity of the World" (pp. 141-55) outlines the Farabian doctrine of emanative procession, Avicenna's version of it, and Averroes' position. While the eternity of the separate substances and celestial spheres is uncontroversial for all of them, that of the sublunar world is accounted for differently. They all agree that "the eternity of the sublunar world is 'caused' by the eternity of the celestial bodies and their separate intellects" (p. 151), but for Averroes this does not need any causality on the part of the *dator formarum*, as was the case with al-Fārābī and Avicenna. With the paper by D. Twetten, "Arabic Cosmology and the Physics of Cosmic Motion" (pp. 156-67) we remain on the same 'physical' ground, but with a special focus on the theories of movement. After an overview of the main theories advanced from the 9th cent. AD (al-Kindī) to the 12th cent. (Averroes), Twetten highlights that Averroes, at variance with Avicenna who refused to use "motion as an argument to arrive at the One as the source of all beings" (p. 160), sets for himself the task of proving the existence of the first principle only on the basis of natural philosophy. "The separate Intelligence moves the heavens (only) as formal and final cause. Just as the active intellect is both form and end for the material intellect, so God for the outermost celestial soul is the form intellectually conceived for the sake of which it moves" (p. 164). A second contribution by L.X. López-Farjeat, this time on "Body, Soul, and Sense in Nature" (pp. 168-82), concludes this cosmological part. López-Farjeat discusses the relationship between body and soul as viewed by Avicenna and Averroes. While for Avicenna soul is different from body and the latter is an instrument of the former, "Ibn Rushd explains the generation of the soul as part of a physical and biological process as described in Aristotle's natural philosophy" (p. 174). Still, the doctrine of the conjunction of the human intellect with the Agent Intellect as a separate substance implies a change in the main paradigm, or at least a shift in accent. "Ibn Rushd' conception of the rational soul needs (...) a more complex explanation given this conjunction with the separate intellects, namely, the material and the agent intellect" (p. 175).

Part IV, *Metaphysics*, occupies a central place in this volume. It is articulated in five chapters and in the first of these, "Establishing the Science of Metaphysics" (pp. 185-96), A. Bertolacci propounds the view that "the

Islamic philosophers (…) decisively contributed to the transformation of traditional metaphysics into a science in the true sense – in their sense, at least – of the word". According to Bertolacci, this "reshaping of the Greek heritage represents the greatest contribution of Islamic philosophy to the history of metaphysics" (p. 185). The epochal representative of this movement, in Bertolacci's opinion, is Avicenna. His discussion of the subject-matter of metaphysics, inspired by al-Fārābī, paved the way to a "profound reworking of the epistemology of the *Metaphysics*" that counts for Bertolacci as "a second 'beginning' of Western metaphysical speculation" (p. 193). S. Pessin, "Forms of Hylomorphism" (pp. 197-211) examines two Islamic versions of the doctrine that everything is composed out of matter and form: the "Neoplatonized Aristotelian Hylomorphism" of Avicenna, and the "Ps. Empedoclean Hylomorphism" that features in al-Šahrastānī's *Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects* (p. 197). Avicenna "extends Aristotelian hylomorphism beyond Aristotle's own text" (p. 198) on two counts: first because for him all the substances, heavenly as well as sublunar, are composed out of a special prime matter and a special first form, "corporeity" (p. 199); second, because he endorses the Neoplatonic emanation, thus considering that "forms are not inherent in matter and that they are on the contrary introduced to matter from an outiside source, viz. the active intellect" (p. 200). As for al-Šahrastānī (d. 548/1153), he inherits from the Ps. Empedoclean (in fact, Neoplatonic) theory of a "pure spiritual prime matter 'between' God and intellect" (p. 202). The discussion of the Ps. Empedoclean doctrine would have benefited from taking into account D. De Smet, *Empedocles Arabus. Une lecture néoplatonicienne tardive*, Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, Brussel 1998. With the paper by R.E. Houser, "Essence and Existence in Ibn Sīnā" (pp. 212-24) a classical topic of Arab-Islamic philosophy is addressed. It is Houser's conviction that Avicenna "reversed directions from Aristotle and espoused a broad sense of 'quiddity'" (p. 216), namely, one that is broad enough to cover substances but also accidents, whereas 'being' "conveys a note of actuality" that points to 'existence'. Hence, "while Ibn Sīnā by no means abandons the actuality of 'form' in relation to matter in the quidditative order, here he is pointing out that within the individual 'thing' or 'being' there is a second kind of actuality, one in the existential order, that is even more fundamental than form" (p. 217). In the first of the two chapters that he has authored for this volume, "Primary and Secondary Causality" (pp. 225-35), R.C. Taylor outlines the origins and developments in Arabic philosophy of the doctrine that "the Divine first cause is both remote from lower effects arising from a plurality of intermediary causes and at the same time somehow powerfully present to those distant effects" (p. 225). This doctrine features in the *Liber de causis* and was important also for Avicenna, who nevertheless made some adjustments: "although Ibn Sīnā too accepts that there is ultimately one Creator, he introduces a distinction of two senses for the use of the term creation (…). This extension of the term creation (*ibdāʿ*) to secondary causes does not occur in the *Kalām fī maḥḍ al-khayr* and *Plotiniana Arabica* but rather is an innovation by Ibn Sīnā since in his emanative hierarchy each of the intelligences truly creates what is below it" (p. 233). Also the paper by J. Janssens, "Metaphysics of God" (pp. 236-47) focuses on Avicenna. Metaphysics as theology remains crucial for him, even taking for granted that metaphysics has being qua being as its object. "In any case, theology remains a fundamental part of metaphysics and it looks doubtful that Ibn Sīnā would have profoundly dissolved the unity of metaphysics" (p. 237) by dissociating ontology from theology. Avicenna's refusal to accept the proof from movement as a way to establish the existence of the first principle is one of the pivots of his metaphysical theology. God must be established "as a principle of being, not just of motion" (p. 240). The cause of the coming into existence of every being, God is also the cause of their maintenance: "Everything indicates that Ibn Sīnā wants to present God as the ultimate cause both from the point of view of efficiency as well as finality" (p. 242). The argument based on the possible and the necessary makes clear that he "tried to avoid as much as possible an inductive, a posteriori account – typical of the Kalām – whereby God's existence is proved on basis of what are the results of his action" (p. 244). The paper by M. Chase, "Creation in Islam from the Qurʾān to al-Fārābī" (pp. 248-60) concludes this part. Chase argues for the influence of Philoponus in the elaboration of "a creationist metaphysics of atemporal instantaneous divine action" (p. 248), and does so through an analysis of al-Kindī's account of creation. In al-Kindī as well as in the Arabic Neoplatonic texts (pseudo-*Theology of Aristotle* and *Liber de causis*) creation is an act performed by God "*dufʿatan wāḥidatan* (at one stroke or all in all and all at once) and/or *bi-lā zamān* (without or outside of time)" (p. 253), a feature that, according to Chase, has good chances of deriving from Porphyry through Philoponus (*ibid.*). Philoponus' account of instantaneous creation was endorsed by al-Kindī and characterises

the reworkings of the original Plotinus and Proclus produced within the context of the Kindian circle (p. 254). This account of creation spread in the philosophical Islamic tradition, until al-Fārābī and Avicenna.

Part V is devoted to *Epistemology and Philosophy of Mind*. C. Di Martino, "External and Internal Human Senses" (pp. 263-72) deals with perception, imagination, memory, and the developments that Aristotle's treatment of these topics generated in Arabic-Islamic philosophy. "Ibn Sīnā (...), the first author to provide a systematic doctrine of the internal senses, and later Ibn Rushd (...) came up with two very different theories of the internal senses" (p. 264). The heritage of Aristotle's *De Anima* accompanied by its commentaries was reworked in such a way as to produce a development that is relevant also for the history of epistemology: "the philosophers of the Arabic tradition developed the notion of *maʿnā*, or the 'signification' of a thing. This term was translated into Latin as *intentio* in the Middle Ages, and profoundly marked the history of psychology, logic, and the philosophy of language" (p. 265). A second essay by R.C. Taylor, "The Epistemology of Abstraction" (pp. 273-84) examines the formation and transmission to the Arabic-speaking world of the doctrine, based on Aristotle's *De Anima*, that the human soul knows by separating from matter the form perceived by the senses. Alexander of Aphrodisias provided a clear abstractionist account of knowledge, implementing it with the idea that the human soul is enabled to intelligise by the active principle of intellection. Such a principle was identified by Alexander of Aphrodisias with the Unmoved Mover itself. Most noticeable in the history of the reception of this doctrine is the fact that "While the three major thinkers of the classical rationalist tradition in Arabic/Islamic philosophy – al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Rushd – declined to follow Alexander in identifying that separate assisting principle of intellect with the First Cause or God, each held for an essential role for a separate Agent Intellect (or Active Intellect: *al-ʿaql al-faʿʿāl*) in abstraction" (pp. 274-5). The subsequent paper by O. Lizzini, "Human Knowledge and Separate Intellect" (pp. 285-300) examines the relationship between the intellect as a faculty of the human soul and the separate principle mentioned above. Two problems arise from interpreting intellectual knowledge in terms of 'conjunction' (*ittiṣāl*) with the separate Agent Intellect: first, there is the question of the real subject of the act of thinking; second, there is the problem of what kind of causality the Agent Intellect performs when it makes a human individual intelligise. "The transcendent character ascribed to the Agent Intellect lends qualities to its conjunction whith the potential human intellect that lie outside the field of epistemology" (p. 289). Finally, C. Bonmariage, "Intellect and the Intelligible in Unity" (pp. 301-12) discusses the reception of the Aristotelian and Neoplatonic topic of the identity between knower and known in intellection as intepreted by Ṣadr al-Dīn Šīrāzī (better known as Mullā Ṣadrā, d. circa 1640). Against the background of Mullā Ṣadrā's doctrine of the "unity of being", the topic of 'conjunction' between the knower and the object known undergoes a shift in meaning. "From a rational animal, able potentially to perceive universal intelligibles, the human being becomes one of the separate substances" (p. 304). Only few human beings, however, can "reach a pure intellective knowledge" (p. 309): most of them "remain at the level of the 'science that pertains to the soul' (*ʿilm nafsānī*)" (*ibid.*). Bonmariage points out that while quoting extensively al-Fārābī and occasionally Alexander of Aphrodisias, Mullā Ṣadrā depends essentially upon the ps.-*Theology of Aristotle* for this idea (p. 310).

Part VI, *Ethics and Political Philosophy*, contains six papers. M. Al-Attar, "The Ethics and Metaphysics of Divine Command Theory" (pp. 315-24) analyses the doctrine, also labelled "theistic subjectivism" or "teological voluntarism", that states that "to be right is to be commanded by God, and to be wrong is to be forbidden by God" (p. 315). In Islam, the doctrine is championed by al-Ašʿarī (d. 324/935), who "absolutely rejected the early attempts of the Muʿtazilites to establish moral ontology" (p. 317), advocating the view that "there is no convincing reason for God to will something over its opposite and no reason for Him to command something rather than the opposite. Al-Ašʿarī even accepted the abhorrent implication of such a position, which is that lying and other conduct that is generally considered wicked would have been good if God had declared them so" (p. 319). This doctrine has been criticised by later Muʿtazilites, especially by ʿAbd al-Ǧabbār (d. 426/1035), and this resulted in partial adoption of the "teleological framework" of moral evaluations also in the Ašʿārite school. In her "Freedom and Determinism" (pp. 325-36) C. Belo explores the cosmological side, so to speak, of theological voluntarism, namely the idea based on Qurʾān 37:96 that "nothing escapes God's all-embracing agency" (p. 327). This potentially undermines the human accountability for deeds, a consequence that is countered by the doctrine of "acquisition (*kasb*)", meaning that human beings "appropriate by choice, their actions. (...) Among all the actions created by God, humans choose the ones they perform" (*ibid.*). The position

of the philosophers was different, and the paper discusses the various theories of voluntary agency against the backdrop of the fact that "we do not find Muslim philosophers defending an Aš'ārite position" (p. 328), even though "a determinist outlook is (...) observable in Ibn Sīnā's metaphysics" (p. 332). As for Averroes, "he displays no strong modal determinism as does Ibn Sīnā" (p. 334). The focus of the paper by Ph. Vallat, "Principles of the Philosophy of State" (pp. 337-45) is on al-Fārābī's theory of the "perfect city-state" (p. 340). The starting point of the Farabian political theory is epistemological: the hierarchy of three levels from intellectual understanding through demonstration, to right opinion and belief, i.e. the lowest level of knowledge, is mirrored in the three orders of the city: philosophers-kings, religious authorities, and the rest of the citizens. "For al-Fārābī the first task of the philosopher consists not in creating a philosophical regime *ex nihilo*, but in shaping pre-existing popular opinions to bring them closer to what resembles the truth so that they can finally form a set of consistent philosophical opinions" (p. 343). N. Germann, "Natural and Revealed Religion" (pp. 346-59) deals with Ibn Ṭufayl and his philosophical tale of the autodidact *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* in the lonely island. "The tale can be read as a parable displaying and pondering the chief competing approaches current in Ibn Ṭufayl's time to the question of how to attain ultimate happiness" (p. 347). In Germann's view, the model of the tale is provided by al-Fārābī: "With a few exceptions (...) Ibn Ṭufayl shaped his *Ḥayy* according to a certain model, originating with al-Fārābī (...), whose writings became the chief point of reference for any later philosopher throughout the classical period on the topics of natural religion and political philosophy" (p. 349). However, once having reached the highest theoretical science accessible to a human being, i.e. natural theology, "Ibn Ṭufayl has his hero Ḥayy depart from al-Fārābī's pattern. The practical consequences Ḥayy draws from his theoretical insights differ significantly, belonging to the devoutness of Sufism rather than political philosophy inspired by Plato" (p. 352). In his "Law and Society" (pp. 360-70) S. Harvey raises the question: "why should learned Muslims need to turn to ancient pagan philosophers to learn about topics such as ethics, the nature and purpose of law, and the ultimate happiness of humans? Does not Islam provide sufficient guidance on these important matters?" (p. 360). The answer to this question lies in their desire "to understand the relation between the teachings of religion and those of philosophy, and where possible to harmonize the two" (*ibid.*). The place assigned to religion in the ideal state is famously an important issue for al-Fārābī, and one that is decided on the basis of the difference between the languages of demonstrative reason and religious persuasion. However, "The problem with this philosophic religion, even the virtuous one that makes possible the happiness of its believers, is that it is not divine religion in the sense that Muslims and Jews, for example, generally understand the term" (p. 362) Thus, the focus of al-Fārābī is "the importance of religion for the well-being of society" (p. 363), and this social utility features also in Avicenna's account. "The Islamic philosophers investigated how revealed religions – Islam, in particular – and thus the religious state differed from and improved upon the best models of the city described by the Greek philosophers" (p. 369). This part ends with a chapter by P. Adamson, "The Ethical Treatment of Animals" (pp. 371-82), that describes how the Hellenistic and Late Antique topics of animal rationality developed well into the Arabic philosophical tradition, even though the relevant treatises by Plutarch and Porphyry were not translated. The physician-philosopher Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (d. 313/925), the *Epistle* of the Iḫwān al-Ṣafāʾ entitled *The Case of the Animals versus Man Before the King of the Jinn*, and Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* provide examples of the ways in which Muslim intellectuals detected commonalities between animals and humans. "Al-Rāzī anticipates Ibn Sīnā by ascribing most psychological functions to both animals and humans" (p. 373). As for the *Epistle*, with its trial staged before an impartial judge – a *jinn*, neither human nor animal – and with its narrative of animals and humans claiming each for superiority, it is not primarily intended to argue for animal rationality, like Plutarch's treatise. "Rather, the debate in the fable concerns the design of divine providence" (p. 377). In a similar vein, Ibn Ṭufayl describes a hierarchy of degrees of being and stages of ascent in imitation of the superior causes on the part of his character Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān, in which care for animals is included.

Finally, Part VII, *Philosophy, Religion, and Mysticism* opens with F. Griffel, "Philosophy and Prophecy" (pp. 385-98). The explanation of the ways in which prophecy can occur implies, for philosophers, the account of the faculties of the human soul that are apt to receive it. A revised version of Aristotle's *Parva Naturalia*, where elements of the Plotinian analysis of dreams are included, provided the basis for such an account. "The Arabic text that pretends to be by Aristotle draws on post-Aristotelian metaphysical and psychological theories and

identifies (...) a celestial intellect as source of veridical dreams" (p. 386). In his *On Sleep and Dream Visions* al-Kindī endorses this doctrine, and al-Fārābī, in the *Opinions of the Citizens of the Virtuos City*, maintains that "the perfect human, who has reached the state of conjunction with the active intellect, receives divine revelation in the form of universal ideas from the active intellect via the mediation of his acquired intellect. That revelation (*waḥy*), however, is immediately passed on the other imaginative faculty (*quwwa mutakhayyila*), where it produces the kind of prophecy that we know from the text of the Qurʾān" (p. 389). Avicenna's theory is not dissimilar. An evident Farabian heritage consists in that "the ability to convey theoretical insights to the masses of the people makes the prophet the best of all rulers" (p. 393). Hence "Ibn Sīnā's prophetology was embraced even by thinkers who harshly criticized other teachings of *falsafa*", like al-Ġazālī, who nevertheless "severely criticizes the *falāsifa*'s position that prophets only teach the masses while philosophers are not in need of divine revelation" (p. 394). The focus of the chapter by M. Rustom, "Philosophical Sufism" (pp. 399-411) is the thought of Ibn ʿArabī (d. 638/1240). In addition to its historical importance, the movement initiated by Ibn ʿArabī deserves special attention because "the central concern of the school (...) is with being or *wujūd*, which is also the central concern of Islamic philosophy. Members of the school of Ibn ʿArabī did not invent an entirely new philosophical vocabulary to explain their teachings. Many of the technical terms and concepts with which they were working had been bequeathed from the well-developed traditions of Islamic philosophy and theology" (p. 400). Among these, the most important is the "Oneness of Being" (*waḥdat al-wuǧūd*), whose pantheistic interpretation is rejected by Rustom (p. 400), although the description of the main tenets of the school provided in the paper point precisely to pantheism as the philosophical background of Ibn ʿArabī and his followers. Finally, A. Shihadeh, "Religious Readings of Philosophy" (pp. 412-22) outlines the reception of and reactions to philosophy in the theological tradition of Islam, showing by means of a comparison between al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013) and al-Ġazālī the shift in emphasis that was determined by Avicenna. Before Avicenna "philosophy was still not perceived as a real threat and could be treated in a cursory manner" (p. 414), as illustrated by al-Bāqillānī's polemics against philosophical cosmology: he provides "extremely little detail on the philosophical views in question" (pp. 414-15), limiting himself to advance against the doctrine of the causes advocated by philosophers a criticism that foreshadows al-Ġazālī's occasionalism. If we turn to the latter, instead, what we find is a very different approach. "Relations between philosophy and theology underwent a huge transformation under the influence of Ibn Sīnā. Not only did he develop a highly compelling philosophical system, he also theorised within that system various typically theological subjects such as prophecy, revelation, miracles, the afterlife and theodicy" (p. 415) that captured the interest of religious scholars in a way no other philosopher before him did. Hence "by the end of the eleventh century, there were rumblings that philosophy was spreading and beginning to pose a real threat to orthodoxy" (p. 416). The duty al-Ġazālī set for himself was that of studying Avicenna's work first-hand (*ibid.*) and the conclusion he reached was that "the philosophers should be deemed unbelievers" (p. 417), less for the individual doctrines they put forth than for their general outlook on religion: "For al-Ghazālī, therefore, the philosophers are branded as unbelievers not simply because they espouse three doctrines that happen to clash with the teachings of scripture, but first and foremost on account of what, from the theological viewpoint, is a more fundamental and potentially more global and far-reaching offence: the view that revelation employs images to explain certain things to common people and thus should not be taken at face value". In al-Ġazālī's views, this was "a threat to the very epistemological and soteriological foundations of religion" (p. 418).

This rich and useful volume ends with a General Index (pp. 423-33).

CDA

The *Oxford Handbook of Islamic Philosophy*, Edited by Kh. El-Rouayheb and S. Schmidtke, Oxford U.P., Oxford 2016 (Oxford Handbooks), 700 pp.

This volume collects thirty chapters dealing with as many philosophical works produced by Muslim authors. The intent of the editors is "to give roughly equal weight to every century from the ninth to the twentieth" (p. 1).