

Key Classical Works on Islamic Ethics

قراءات في عيون التراث الأخلاقي الإسلامي

Studies in Islamic Ethics

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Key Classical Works on Islamic Ethics

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Edited by

Mutaz al-Khatib

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مُعْتَزُ الْخَطِيبِ



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*For Yaman,
May this work inspire you and your generation
to explore the beauty of wisdom and ethics,
and may you all grow with curiosity, compassion,
and a love for learning.*



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Notes on Style, Transliteration, and Dates

For referencing, this volume follows the *Chicago Manual of Style* author-date in-text citation system.

Arabic words and names are transliterated according to the system used in Brill's *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three*, which is also adopted in the *Journal of Islamic Ethics (JIE)*:

Consonants: ʾ, b, t, th, j, ḥ, kh, d, dh, r, z, s, sh, ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ḏ, ʿ, gh, f, q, k, l, m, n, h, w, y.

Short vowels: a, i, u.

Long vowels: ā, ī, ū.

Diphthongs: aw, ay.

Tā' marbūṭa: -a, -at (construct state).

While classical proper names are fully transliterated (e.g., al-Ghazālī), modern names, i.e., since 1900, also the official or common spellings are adopted (e.g., Muhammad Abdullah Draz). The “l” of the definite article “al-” is always retained, regardless of whether it is assimilated in pronunciation to the initial consonant of the word to which it is attached (*idghām*).

If not otherwise specified, the dates given are common era (CE) dates. If two dates are provided (e.g., 505/1111), the first one is the year according to the Islamic *hijrī* calendar (AH), and the second the CE date. For dates after 1900, only the CE date is provided.

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Introduction

Mutaz al-Khatib

1 Prelude

Classical bibliographers traditionally classified the science of *akhlāq*—moral character traits—as a branch of “practical wisdom” (*al-ḥikma al-ʿamaliyya*), specifically concerning self-governance (*siyāsāt al-naḥs*). In this framework, *akhlāq* emphasises the acquisition of self-qualities aimed at personal perfection and happiness, engaging deeply with virtues for cultivation and vices for avoidance (see Ḥajjī Khalīfa 1941, 1:35; 1:676, 2:1289; al-Qinnawjī 2002, 253, 376, 467). However, this volume adopts a broader conception of ethics than the traditional Greek-originated approach. Here, ethics encompasses both the agent and actions, integrating deontic and virtue ethics. This volume examines Islamic classical works across multiple specialised fields, bridging theoretical and practical dimensions, and extending beyond the Greek model of moral philosophy. It explores varied approaches to ethics, positioning itself as a reference work in the emerging field of Islamic ethics. This interdisciplinary field incorporates various disciplines within Islamic studies as well as external fields such as medicine, offering an extensive and analytical examination of ethical thought in classical times.

In this introduction, I will address three main issues: modern scholarship on ethics in the Islamic tradition, the focus of this volume, and its content and methodology.

2 Modern Scholarship on Ethics

Islamic Ethics, as a discipline, has been extensively developed through the contributions of numerous scholars, such as Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz (d. 1958), Dwight Donaldson (d. 1976), George Hourani (d. 1984), Aḥmad Maḥmūd Ṣubḥī (d. 2004), Mohammed Arkoun (d. 2010), Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābirī (d. 2010), ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Qābīl (d. 2020), Majid Fakhry (d. 2021), among other contemporary scholars. However, the complexity of this subject has intensified due to the burgeoning nature of the field on one hand, and the broadened access to its classical sources and deepening insights into them on the other. There is a pressing need to systematically classify these sources and to develop conceptual and theoretical frameworks that ensure philosophical rigour and

coherence. Moreover, this rich ethical legacy invites further exploration into the potential of diverse ethical theories within its scope.

Modern scholarship on Islamic ethics has manifested in various forms, encompassing diverse methodologies and focal points. One prevalent approach investigates major ethical theories within the Qurʾān and/or Islamic tradition, such as exploring theories of “good” and “duty,” in the Qurʾān, as well as theories of moral rationalism and spiritual taste (*dhawq*), duty and happiness, natural law, and divine command theory within the Islamic tradition (Drāz 1998; Ṣubḥī 1983; Qābil 1984; Emon 2010; al-Attar 2019). Another approach addresses a specific thematic issue, such as the connection between *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and ethics, or the obligation within *kalām* (Islamic theology) (see, for example: Rahman 1985; Makdisi 1985; Frank 1983; Farahat 2019). A third approach delves into the ethical thought of seminal figures, including the Muʿtazilī judge ʿAbd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210), Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) among others (see, for example: Hourani 1971; Shihadeh 2006; Vasalou 2015). The fourth approach provides a general overview of ethics as viewed through various fields of Islamic knowledge (Donaldson 1953; Naṣṣār 2004; Ramadan 2019). The fifth approach focuses on the historical development of ethical thought within Islamic civilisation by reviewing classical sources related to ethics (see, for example: Fakhry 1991; al-Jābirī 2001). However, writing in this latter style has been marred by several shortcomings, which are either related to a lack of theoretical coherence or to the neglect of significant sources and branches, such as jurisprudential ethics, or by limiting their scope to theoretical ethics while excluding practical ethics (see critiques of these attempts: Arkoun 1993; Gutas 1997; al-Bishrī 2002).

It is important to note that there have been some efforts to compile bibliographies on the sources of Islamic ethics. Some of these attempts, however, have been preliminary in nature (Arkoun 1986), while others have suffered from a lack of coherent theoretical underpinnings (Nūr al-Dīn 2006; Bahbahānī Būr 2012). Additionally, a third category of efforts has been limited by both temporal and geographical constraints (ʿAṭiyya 1990; March 2009).

3 This Volume

This volume is predicated on an expansive concept of ethics and provides an analytical study of a list of classic Islamic sources spanning from the third/ninth to the eighth/fourteenth century. It encompasses a wide range of disciplines, such as *ḥadīth*, as exemplified by *Kitāb Makārim al-Akhlāq* (“The Book of Noble Character”) by Ibn Abī l-Dunyā (d. 281/894); *sīra* or the

Prophet's biography, notably in *Kitāb al-Shifā bi-Ta'rif Ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā* ("The Cure in Knowing the Rights of the Chosen One") by al-Qāḍī 'Iyād (d. 544/1149); *kalām*, with seminal works like *al-Irshād ilā Qawāṭi' al-Adilla fī Uṣūl al-I'tiqād* ("Guidance to the Essentials of Evidence in the Fundamentals of Belief") by al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085) and *Nihāyat al-Iqdām fī 'Ilm al-Kalām* ("The Ultimate Conclusion in the Science of Theology") by al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153); *fiqh*, represented by *al-Ādāb al-Shar'īyya* ("Divinely Mandated Etiquettes") by Ibn Muflīh (d. 763/1362); Sufism, through texts such as *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* ("The Unusual Principles") by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, *Uyūb al-Nafs wa-Mudāwātuhā* ("The Maladies of the Soul and Their Remedies") by al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* ("Revival of the Religious Sciences") by al-Ghazālī, and *al-Tuḥfa al-ʿIrāqīyya fī l-ʿMāl al-Qalbiyya* ("The Iraqi Gift on the Works of the Heart") by Ibn Taymiyya; philosophy, highlighted by *al-Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī* ("Spiritual Medicine") by Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (d. 313/925) and *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq wa-Taḥṭīr al-A'rāq* ("Refinement of Character and the Purification of Natural Dispositions") by Miskawayh (d. 421/1030); and medicine, with *Adab al-Ṭabīb* ("Ethics of the Physician") by Iṣḥāq b. 'Alī al-Ruhāwī (fl. third-fourth/ninth-tenth centuries). Furthermore, the interdisciplinary approach is enriched by three works by al-'Izz Ibn 'Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1262): *Shajarat al-Ma'ārīf wa-l-Aḥwāl wa-Ṣāliḥ al-Aqwāl wa-l-ʿMāl* ("The Tree of Knowledge, States, Righteous Statements, and Actions"), *al-Imām fī Bayān Adillat al-Aḥkām* ("The Leader in Explaining the Proofs of Rulings"), and *Qawā'id al-Aḥkām fī Iṣlāḥ al-Anām* ("The Principles of Rulings for the Betterment of Humanity").

Building on the expanded conception of ethics outlined earlier, this volume transcends the traditional narrow Greek philosophical model. It elucidates that the field of ethics is inherently multidisciplinary, bringing both theoretical and practical ethics. Historically, the dominance of the theoretical perspective led to the marginalisation of many significant works from the field of Islamic ethics. Looking ahead, in a subsequent volume we aspire to include additional sources that span other fields, such as *adab*, and encompass later historical periods.

Furthermore, this volume illustrates two critical dimensions of Islamic ethics. Firstly, it underscores the richness and diversity of ethical conceptions within the Islamic tradition; showcasing a spectrum of approaches—Greek philosophical, narrative, and analytical—that extend beyond mere philosophical discourse. Secondly, it challenges the prevailing notion of a scarcity of ethical sources within Islamic civilisation by demonstrating the extensive breadth of ethical works that have historically been integral to Islamic scholarly pursuits.

4 Volume Content and Methodology

This volume originates from the proceedings of the eighth international conference convened at the Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics (CILE), in collaboration with Leuven University, under the title “Key Classical Works on Islamic Ethics.” The conference took place from 6 to 8 December 2020. While contributions to the field have been made by existing studies on some specific classic sources, they often remain limited and are sometimes fraught with issues, as highlighted in various chapters of this volume, particularly the first. Most notably, many classical sources have yet to be thoroughly explored and analysed, thus representing a largely uncharted territory. Considering the challenge of covering all ethical sources in a single volume, we have selected a representative sample that showcases diverse modes of ethical reasoning within the Islamic tradition. These selections demonstrate that practical rationality in the Islamic tradition extends beyond the Greek philosophical framework. They provide scholarly insights crucial for addressing and correcting certain longstanding misconceptions about Islamic ethical philosophy and its historical development misconceptions that have persisted among some scholars since the early twentieth century (for further details, see the first chapter of this volume).

Throughout its chapters, this volume employs a structured methodology that begins with a concise biographical examination of each author, focusing on their ethical contributions and overarching moral projects, followed by a critical analysis of each selected classical work to unearth its unique ethical insights. Additionally, the chapters thoroughly explore the historical and intellectual context of these works, investigating their genealogy, potential sources, and their enduring impact on the field of ethics, spanning both classical and contemporary scholarship.

Chapter 1, titled “Mapping Islamic Ethical Sources: A Critical Review,” authored by Mutaz al-Khatib, comprehensively explores the foundational sources underpinning Islamic ethics within the rich tapestry of Islamic tradition. Its central role lies in laying the intellectual groundwork for the ensuing scholarly dialogues encapsulated within this edited volume. In light of the enduring debates and scholarly deliberations surrounding the contours of this burgeoning academic discipline and its foundational sources, this chapter embarks on a meticulous exploration of several crucial dimensions. The chapter commences by delving into the fundamental rationale behind dissecting the “sources of Islamic ethics,” elucidating the significance of this inquiry within contemporary academic discourse. Subsequently, it engages in

a discerning examination of Islamic ethics as a distinct and evolved discipline within the modern intellectual landscape. It scrutinises the profound influence of the overarching concept of ethics on the definition of the academic identity of this discipline and the nuanced perspectives it engenders concerning the sources from which it derives. Furthermore, this chapter critically deconstructs contemporary approaches aimed at documenting, analysing, and categorising Islamic ethical sources, shedding light on the evolving methodologies employed in this endeavour.

Chapter 2, titled “The Ethics of Certainty: *Makārim al-Akhlāq* by Ibn Abī l-Dunyā,” authored by Paul Heck, engages in an in-depth exploration of the intellectual contributions of Ibn Abī l-Dunyā (d. 281/894) to the field of Islamic ethics. Ibn Abī l-Dunyā is recognised as a seminal figure, notable for his pioneering efforts in articulating a comprehensive framework for Islamic ethics. His approach is deeply rooted in inner spirituality and reflects a nuanced understanding of the ethical discussions prevalent in his historical context. The chapter commences with an examination of Ibn Abī l-Dunyā’s multifaceted persona, with particular attention to his role as a prominent *ḥadīth* scholar, an aspect that continues to be a subject of scholarly debate. Following this examination, the narrative provides a concise and contextually relevant overview of contemporary scholarship concerning Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, specifically focusing on its applicability to *Kitāb Makārim al-Akhlāq* (“The Book of Noble Character”), which is analysed, in detail, in subsequent sections of the chapter. This analysis commences with an exploration of the author’s introductory statements and proceeds to a comprehensive examination of key concepts drawn from Ibn Abī l-Dunyā’s broader literary corpus. These concepts, extrapolated from his various writings, collectively elucidate the breadth of his ethical framework. In the concluding part of the chapter, the author offers thoughtful reflections on the enduring legacy of Ibn Abī l-Dunyā’s contributions to the field of Islamic ethics.

Chapter 3, titled “*Adab al-Ṭabīb* by Ishāq b. ‘Alī al-Ruhāwī: The Continued Relevance of Classical Medical Ethics,” authored by Mohammed Ghaly, explores al-Ruhāwī’s seminal work *Adab al-Ṭabīb* (“Ethics of the Physician”). Being a physician immersed in the Greek medico-philosophical tradition during the third-fourth/ninth-tenth centuries, al-Ruhāwī combines medicine with philosophy and religion in his text, reflecting a holistic view of human nature. The chapter analyses al-Ruhāwī’s approach to medical excellence, which integrates moral dimensions rooted in religious and virtue ethics with professional expertise in health preservation and medical practice reform. It discusses how moral excellence incorporates moderating the psyche’s powers and managing patient and caregiver interactions, while professional excellence focuses on

enhancing medical knowledge and reforming healthcare practices. The concluding remarks emphasise al-Ruhāwī's continuous influence on contemporary Islamic bioethics and the historical evolution of medical ethics, highlighting his work's significance in the broader discourse of ethical healthcare practices.

Chapter 4, titled "al-Ru'ya al-Akhlāqīyya fī *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* lil-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī: Wilā'iyat al-Akhlāq wa-Wilā'iyat al-Sulṭa" ("The Ethical Vision in al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's *Nawādir al-Uṣūl*: The Sainthood of Ethics and Authority"), authored by Shafīqa Wa'īl (Chafika Ouail), argues that *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* ("The Unusual Principles") is an exception in that it, on its surface, appears to be a *ḥadīth* book equipped with characteristics of *ḥadīth* scholarship in terms of narration and transmission. However, in terms of insight and analysis, it specialises in a vision that surpasses *ḥadīth* scholarship. It employs concepts and analytical tools with an ethical and Sufi nuance. The chapter provides a scholarly reading of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's (d. ca. 265–320/879–932) book, situating it between the general realm of *ḥadīth* scholars and the sphere of Sufi scholars. Subsequently, it sheds light on al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's ethical vision and its relationship with religious-moral authority and political authority, which he presents within the larger framework of his project, referred to as *wilāya* (sainthood).

Chapter 5, titled "The Cognitive Therapy of Abū Bakr al-Rāzī's *al-Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī*," authored by Raja Bahlul, embarks on a theoretical exploration of Abū Bakr al-Rāzī's (d. 313/925) work *al-Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī* ("Spiritual Medicine"). This chapter scrutinises the book's central thesis, aiming to illustrate that al-Rāzī's work forms a sustained endeavour to elaborate and defend three inter-related propositions. Firstly, it posits that vices and psychic ailments emanate from epistemic deficiencies, wherein individuals may lack a complete understanding of what is morally good or what the consequences of their actions are. Secondly, it asserts the causal efficacy of reason and understanding, contending that these faculties provide incentives for individuals to believe in what is morally right and act accordingly. Lastly, it contends that possessing the right knowledge, guided by reason, is sufficient to set one on the path of virtue and psychic well-being. The chapter seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of al-Rāzī's noteworthy contributions to the realm of philosophical ethics. It commences with a succinct exploration of al-Rāzī's life, historical context, and body of work, placing him within the broader philosophical tradition. Subsequently, the chapter delves into the key issues that illuminate the book's overarching argument.

Chapter 6, titled "Didactics of Blame and Tactics to Tame: Al-Sulamī's *Uyūb al-Nafs wa-Mudāwātuhā*," authored by Jason Welle, provides an exploration of the life and ethical endeavours of the Nishāpūrian *shaykh* Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān

al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), with a particular focus on his treatise, *ʿUyūb al-Nafs wa-Mudāwātuhā* (“The Maladies of the Soul and Their Remedies”). In other works, al-Sulamī addresses religious growth through the lenses of proper customs, virtues, and spiritual states. However, in *ʿUyūb al-Nafs*, he employs the metaphor of healing and therapy. In this treatise, al-Sulamī collects a range of strategies to confront defects in a believer’s religio-moral life. The chapter acknowledges the challenges of studying a Sufi master like al-Sulamī, who does not systematically organise his material. Nevertheless, it highlights the significance of *ʿUyūb al-Nafs* within al-Sulamī’s body of work, both for its content and distinctive approach. In responding to the struggles faced by believers burdened with *nafs* (ego) inciting them to evil, al-Sulamī offers a message of hope for healing. He envisions a religious life in which ethical growth and spiritual development are inseparable, providing a profound perspective on the journey of self-improvement.

Chapter 7, titled “Miskawayh’s *Kitāb Ṭahārat al-Nafs* as a Program Leading to Ethicisation of Knowledge,” authored by Hans Daiber, focuses on Miskawayh’s (d. 421/1030) work *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq wa-Ṭaḥḥīr al-ʿRāq* (“Refinement of Character and the Purification of Natural Dispositions”), also known under the title *Kitāb Ṭahārat al-Nafs* (“Book on the Purity of the Soul”). This chapter highlights how Miskawayh’s ethical handbook serves as a guide for self-education and discipline. Miskawayh’s distinctive ethical system combines practical and “spiritual” virtues, striving for closeness to God and inner contentment. He presents his educational program as a means to comprehend the soul’s journey toward its divine origin, emphasising the individual’s progression toward being more “God-like.” The chapter also explores the influence of Miskawayh’s ethics on subsequent authors, including al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (d. fifth/eleventh century) and al-Ghazālī, who integrated Miskawayh’s philosophical ethics into Islamic ethics. This influence extended well into the thirteenth/nineteenth century, notably in the works of figures like Rifʿa al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (d. 1290/1873). Miskawayh’s ethics played a pivotal role in integrating ethics into Islamic jurisprudence and its application in politics, as exemplified by al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058) and Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Abī l-Rabīʿ (d. seventh/thirteenth century). This historical development, which traces its roots to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ in the second/eighth century, found a philosophical foundation in Miskawayh’s ethics, emphasising love, friendship, and justice as foundational principles of human dignity.

Chapter 8, titled “Meta-Ethical Contributions of Ashʿarī Theological Writings: A Reading in Juwaynī’s *al-Irshād* and Shahrastānī’s *Nihāyat al-Iqdām*,” authored by Omar Farahat, asserts that classical Ashʿarī theological works, specifically in *kalām* and *uṣūl al-dīn*, held a significant place in theoretical ethics.

These works aimed to uphold a central Ash‘arī claim that knowledge of the moral status of actions and, consequently, legal norms, is epistemologically impossible without divine revelation. To support this claim, the chapter introduces and contextualises two classical Ash‘arī theological works: *al-Irshād ilā Qawāṭi‘ al-Adilla fi Uṣūl al-‘Itiqād* (“Guidance to the Essentials of Evidence in the Fundamentals of Belief”) by Imām al-Ḥaramayn Abū al-Ma‘ālī al-Juwaynī and *Nihāyat al-Iqdām fi ‘Ilm al-Kalām* (“The Ultimate Conclusion in the Science of Theology”) by Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Shahrastānī. This exploration sheds light on the development of foundational Ash‘arī doctrines during a pivotal phase of their evolution. The central focus is on the meta-ethical project advanced by these works, emphasising their reflections on the concepts and general theories that underpin ethical inquiry and judgment. A significant portion of intellectual effort was dedicated to clarifying the distinction between divine and human attributes, with a broader aim of demarcating the divine from the human realm. These discussions encompassed divine states, will, and the absence of accidents. Ultimately, these inquiries aimed to establish the distinctiveness of divine attributes, including revelation. This distinctiveness was foundational to the Ash‘arī belief that no other created phenomenon, including human reason and intuition, could be equated with divine revelation in terms of moral authority. This distinction forms the core of the Ash‘arī response to their theological adversaries.

Chapter 9, titled “*Ihyā’ Ulūm al-Dīn* by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī,” authored by Taneli Kukkonen, explores the ethical dimensions of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī’s *Ihyā’ Ulūm al-Dīn* (“Revival of the Religious Sciences”). This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section introduces al-Ghazālī as a prominent thinker with a strong ethical focus. It provides insight into his significant contribution to moral philosophy. The second section delves into four recurring ethical themes found within the book, shedding light on the central ethical concepts and discussions presented by al-Ghazālī. Finally, the chapter offers brief insights into the broader context of the *Ihyā’*, including al-Ghazālī’s use of sources, the role of the *Ihyā’* within al-Ghazālī’s body of work, and the lasting impact of the *Ihyā’* on Islamic thought and ethics.

Chapter 10, titled “Ethical Dimensions of al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ’s *al-Shifā’*,” authored by Matthew Anderson, commences with a concise overview of al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ’s (d. 544/1149) life and a survey of pertinent theories regarding the historical and thematic origins of *Kitāb al-Shifā’ bi-Ta’rīf Ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā* (“The Cure in Knowing the Rights of the Chosen One”). This chapter then delves into three key ethical dimensions of the book. Firstly, it examines the ethical perspective of the Prophet Muḥammad as presented in the initial part of *al-Shifā’*. Particular attention is given to the sources that al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ may have drawn

upon while composing this section. Secondly, the chapter briefly introduces the individual and societal ethics embedded within *al-Shifā*. In conclusion, the chapter reflects on the significance of these ethical dimensions in comprehending the work and considers their relationship to the distinct authority accorded to *al-Shifā* within a broader tradition that produced numerous works celebrating the virtues and achievements of the Prophet Muḥammad.

Chapter 11, titled “al-‘Izz Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām wa-l-Ta’sīs lil-Akhlāq al-Islāmiyya Ḥaqlan Muta‘addid al-Takhaṣṣuṣāt: Qirā’a fī *Shajarat al-Ma‘ārif wa-l-Imām wa-Qawā’id al-Aḥkām*” (“al-‘Izz Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām and the Foundation of Islamic Ethics as an Interdisciplinary Field: A Study of *Shajarat al-Ma‘ārif*, *al-Imām*, and *Qawā’id al-Aḥkām*”), authored by Mutaz al-Khatib, argues that *imām* ‘Izz al-Dīn Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1262) conceptualises “Islamic ethics” as an interdisciplinary field that intertwines theoretical and practical aspects. This approach utilises a variety of domains beginning with Qur’ān and *ḥadīth*, thus laying the foundations of what he alternately refers to as *ādāb al-Qur’ān* and *akhlāq al-Qur’ān*. Al-‘Izz’s ethical framework incorporates elements from *kalām* (Islamic theology), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), Sufism, and *uṣūl al-fiqh* (Islamic legal theory). The chapter critically examines the scholarly works of al-‘Izz, reflecting on how they mirror his personality and intellectual orientation. It also addresses the challenges faced by contemporary scholars in categorising al-‘Izz’s contribution according to established Islamic sciences. The bulk of the chapter is dedicated to analysing the key aspects of the ethical theory al-‘Izz propounded through his three pivotal works: *Shajarat al-Ma‘ārif wa-l-Aḥwāl wa-Ṣāliḥ al-Aqwāl wa-l-A’māl* (“The Tree of Knowledge, States, Righteous Statements, and Actions”), *Qawā’id al-Aḥkām fī Iṣlāḥ al-Anām* (“The Principles of Rulings for the Betterment of Humanity”), and *al-Imām fī Bayān Adillat al-Aḥkām* (“The Leader in Explaining the Proofs of Rulings”). The conclusion highlights the distinctive characteristics of al-‘Izz’s thought and the significant impact of his contributions to what is now recognised as “Islamic ethics.”

Chapter 12, titled “Ibn Taymiyya’s *al-Tuḥfa al-‘Irāqīyya*: A Framework to Rectify and Legitimise Sufi States and Stations,” authored by Arjan Post, explores Ibn Taymiyya’s work titled *al-Tuḥfa al-‘Irāqīyya fī l-A’māl al-Qalbiyya* (“The Iraqi Gift on the Works of the Heart”). The chapter investigates Ibn Taymiyya’s unique perspective on Sufism within this text. Initially, Ibn Taymiyya appears to align with classical Sufi concepts such as “states” and “stations” as aspects of a believer’s inner spiritual experiences. However, the chapter points out that Ibn Taymiyya’s engagement with Sufism is more nuanced than it initially seems. A deeper examination reveals an ethical approach to spirituality, particularly in the context of Sufism. It highlights how Ibn Taymiyya’s work seeks

to reconcile Sufism with his traditionalist framework. The chapter emphasises that understanding this work necessitates considering Ibn Taymiyya's broader body of work and his endeavour to harmonise Sufism with his traditionalist perspective. Despite limited historical information on the book's reception in earlier centuries, it has gained attention in recent times, especially in reformist and Salafi circles. Ultimately, this chapter aims to provide a scholarly perspective on the book and its place within Ibn Taymiyya's approach to spirituality, shedding light on his project to purify Sufism.

Chapter 13, titled "*al-Ādāb al-Shar'īyya* by Ibn Muflīḥ: The Ḥanbalī Tradition and Ethical Principles," authored by Ovamir Anjum, delves into *al-Ādāb al-Shar'īyya* ("Divinely Mandated Etiquettes"), a treatise on ethics and social etiquette within the Ḥanbalī tradition by Ibn Muflīḥ al-Maqdisī (d. 763/1263), a prominent authority of the school and a disciple of Ibn Taymiyya. In contrast to figures like Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350), who integrated Sufi teachings and theological considerations into their works, Ibn Muflīḥ's approach remains firmly rooted in jurisprudence and tradition, devoid of Sufi influences. This chapter highlights two main aspects of his work: his comprehensive examination of white lies and ruses (*ma'ārīḍ*) in Islamic tradition and his perspectives on two fundamental Islamic virtues; repentance as a central religious virtue and truthfulness as a universal virtue. By analysing these elements, the chapter illuminates the distinct ethical perspective within the Ḥanbalī tradition and its valuable contributions to the field of Islamic ethics.

5 Conclusion

By analysing selected classical works spanning from the third/ninth century to the eighth/fourteenth century, this volume provides historical depth and adopts an interdisciplinary approach, incorporating disciplines often neglected in studies of Islamic ethics. The chapters offer profound analyses of the ethical dimensions within these works, illuminating the authors' perspectives and fostering comparative insights. This volume effectively traces the enduring influence and legacy of these classical texts, charting the intellectual evolution of Islamic ethics and underscoring its contemporary relevance.

Collectively, these chapters illuminate essential themes in Islamic ethical thought, showcasing the development of structured ethical frameworks that draw from diverse sources. They highlight the complex interplay between inner spirituality and external behaviour, revealing the theological foundations of Islamic ethics rooted in divine attributes and scriptural guidance. The

inclusion of Qur'ānic verses, *ḥadīth*, the prophetic moral model, philosophical discourse, and Sufi insights into one volume emphasises the dynamic and evolving nature of this field.

Throughout the volume, the pursuit of human flourishing and individual well-being emerges as a pivotal theme. These classical works continue to influence subsequent generations of scholars and adapt to changing contexts, highlighting their lasting significance and ongoing relevance. The discussions on virtues and vices, along with the cultivation of virtuous character, are central to addressing various ethical challenges and dilemmas. In summary, this volume demonstrating the interconnectedness of Islamic ethical thought, showcases its multifaceted engagement with moral questions across a broad spectrum of domains, from theology to jurisprudence and beyond.

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bibliography following this introduction, which covers relevant literature published in English on one or more classical ethical works. This curated list aims to provide readers with texts that inform and deepen the discussions presented in this volume.

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Mutaz al-Khatib

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