

Introduction

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This special issue of *Oriens* brings together a selection of the papers presented at the first workshop of the European Research Council Consolidator Grant project *Epistemic Transitions in Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Science*, organised at the Finnish Institute in Rome in December 2017. I am the principal investigator of the project and the visiting editor of this special issue.

The thematic scope of the issue is provided by the project's focus on the so-called post-classical period in Islamic philosophy (*falsafa*, *ḥikma*, but also *ishrāqī* thought), theology (*kalām*), and philosophically oriented Sufism (*taṣawwuf*, *irfān*). Like the project, the papers published here cover a broad period from the sixth/twelfth century, including views to the earlier, classical background, down to the thirteenth/eighteenth century. The philosophical focus is firmly on metaphysics, but the papers also raise crucial historical questions about the interrelations between authors. Taken as a whole, this collection of papers testifies to the genuine philosophical value of the various strands of post-classical thought, including the purveyors of Avicennian *ḥikma*, but also their critics among the theologians, *ishrāqī* authors, and theoretically inclined Sufis.

The volume is opened by Ayman Shihadeh's article, which traces the outlines of a mereological debate from formative through classical *kalām* down to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) and Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328). The debate is intimately connected to the important *kalām* proof of God's existence from the createdness of accidents. The paper offers an improved historical account of the development of the argument, but also makes a philosophical contribution by defending the argument against the current view according to which it is logically invalid.

The second paper is my own attempt to interpret Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī's (d. 587/1191) criticism of the so-called *i'tibārī* concepts of Peripatetic metaphysics in relation to his alternative *ishrāqī* system. Focusing on the concept of substance (*jawhar*), I argue that Suhrawardī does not argue that we should entirely refrain from applying *i'tibārī* concepts in metaphysics. In my

reconstruction, he grounds their validity in *infima species* concepts that correspond to extramental reality. In the end, I suggest that *i'tibārī* concepts do indeed resemble transcendental concepts in a vaguely Kantian sense.

In the third article, Bilal Ibrahim makes an ambitious claim, according to which Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's critical epistemology amounts to a radical empiricist alternative to Avicenna's Peripatetic essentialism. Moreover, Ibrahim suggests that this alternative was further developed by later post-classical *mutakallimūn*, such as 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 756/1355), his commentator al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413), and their glossators. If Ibrahim is on the right track, these understudied later thinkers deserve much closer philosophical attention than they have hitherto been afforded.

Wahid Amin's article is an investigation on the post-classical reception of Avicenna's employment of the Neoplatonic 'rule of the one' (*qā'ida al-wāḥid*), according to which from one principle, insofar as it is one, only one thing can emerge. In a monotheistic and emanationist framework, the principle results in the classical problem of how to explain the emergence of multiplicity from an absolutely one principle. Amin shows that the discussion concerning the principle remained vivid, not least due to the severe critiques levelled at it by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), Sharaf al-Dīn al-Mas'ūdī (d. before 600/1204), and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.

The fifth article, by Yusuf Daşdemir, investigates the somewhat uneasy integration of Avicennian logic and theory of science into the Akbarian Sufi framework by Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274) and his commentator, the Ottoman author Mullā al-Fanārī (d. 834/1431). In their attempts to clear room for the specifically Akbarian identification of God with absolute existence, which transcends human knowledge, as well as to lay down methodological criteria for immediate, non-demonstrative knowledge about it (*dhawq, kashf*), Qūnawī and Fanārī tried to expand, instead of simply refuting, the Avicennian theory of science. According to Daşdemir, this ambitious attempt left their reconstruction of systematic Sufism with intrinsic tensions.

Cécile Bonmariage's paper takes a methodological turn by investigating the tacit reliance of Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1044/1635–6) on the works of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. By way of a meticulous analysis of several examples, Bonmariage tantalisingly shows how extensive use Ṣadrā made of his *mutakallim* predecessor, despite the fact that his explicit mentions of Rāzī are often rather critical. The paper is a lesson on the importance of the earlier post-classical period for a historically founded understanding of Ṣadrā, whose philosophy is frequently said to have initiated a new chapter in Iranian philosophy.

The issue is concluded by Sajjad Rizvi's article on Maḥdī Narāqī (d. 1209/1705), which brings us historically close to our own time. In a survey of this

important late representative of Avicennian philosophy, Rizvi shows that the philosophical scene of the Qajar period was by no means decisively dominated by followers of Mullā Ṣadrā.¹

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Bibliography

Pourjavady, Reza, ed. *Philosophy in Qajar Iran*. Leiden: Brill, 2019.

¹ In this regard, see now the extremely valuable *Philosophy in Qajar Iran*, ed. by Reza Pourjavady (Leiden: Brill, 2019).