waits in the wings, especially considering that the transfer philosophy has been very strong in mainstream Zionist thinking since the end of the nineteenth century, as Nur Masalaha shows ably in three of his books. Let us wait and see.

Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi


For seven hundred years or more the study of Aristotelian logic in its Avicennan form has been one of the pillars of the curriculum of Islamic madrasahs. As in other disciplines the basic textbooks are short summaries of logic, written in almost telegraphic style. Teachers and students work their way through these texts line by line, arguing about each sentence and sometimes each word. The written counterpart of these classroom discussions, and often their results, are commentaries and supercommentaries in which the implications of the text are expounded and problems are raised and dealt with. There are thousands of such commentaries in manuscript, and hundreds have been published. Some are no more than fair copies of student notes, while others are standard works well known to many generations of students and teachers.

Academic historians of Islamic logic have largely ignored these texts as the product of an age of decline and scholasticism, but the truth is that modern scholarship knows virtually nothing about the content and concerns of this literature after its starting point in the logic of Avicenna. The elementary logic texts are, of course, elementary logic, but little is known of the presumably more sophisticated debates in the commentaries and supercommentaries. The difficulty is increased for those not part of the tradition by the commentary format, which buries innovations and living disputes in masses of repetitions.

of well-established logical doctrines. It is a literature with few easy points of entry for the historian of logic. As a result, when modern scholars dealt with this literature, it has usually been only as bibliographers.

The present work is, so far as I know, the only attempt to make a substantial work of later Islamic logic available in a modern Western language. The book actually contains translations of three texts: Ibn Sinā’s Risālab-’i Manṭiq, Treatise on Logic, which is the logical portion of his Persian philosophical encyclopedia, Dānishmānab-’i ‘Alāʾ; the logical portion of Sa’d al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī’s Tabdhib al-Manṭiq wa al-Kalām, Training in Logic and Theology, written in 789/1387; and an Urdu commentary on the Tabdhib, Tawshīḥ al-Tabdhib, published in 1317/1899 by Mawlānā Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Rahmān Baqā Ghāzipūrī. The translation of the Tabdhib appears in the form of lemmas in its commentary.

Ibn Sinā’s Risālab-’i Manṭiq in some ways does not fit with the other two works. To begin with, it is in Persian, and the Persian philosophical vocabulary that Ibn Sinā experimented with in the Dānishmānab never passed into general use. Scholarly works on all subjects, including logic and philosophy, were generally written in Arabic, and even when they were written in one of the Islamic vernaculars, almost all the technical terms were borrowed from Arabic. Ibn Sinā’s Ishārāt, an Arabic work that does seem to have been the starting point of the school logic tradition in Islam, would have been a better choice. Second, Ibn Sinā’s works on logic were not usually used as textbooks in the later madrasahs. The earliest textbook to pass into common use was Kātibi’s Shamsiyyah from the 7th/13th century. On the other hand, it was Ibn Sinā’s formulation of logic that was the basis for the whole later Islamic logical tradition, so starting with a logical text by Ibn Sinā is not unreasonable. Moreover, Ibn Sinā’s various philosophical encyclopedias tended to cover the same material in greater or lesser detail, so there probably are not significant differences of logical doctrine, or even of scope and presentation, between the Risālab-’i Manṭiq and, say, the Ishārāt.

Taftāzānī’s Tabdhib, on the other hand, has been in common use as a textbook for six hundred years and is one of the three or four most popular primary logic textbooks in the Islamic tradition. It is, to begin with, a very short book, perhaps fifteen or twenty pages, written in very condensed language. A beginning student could probably make little sense of it without a teacher. Following the traditional Islamic logical distinction of conceptions and assents, it deals first with terms, semantics, and definitions—corresponding to the content of Porphyry’s Eisogoge and Aristotle’s Categories and part of De Interpretatione — and then with propositions and syllogisms — the rest of De Interpretatione and the Prior Analytics. At the end there is a relatively short
section on “the five arts”: demonstration, dialectic, rhetoric, poetics, and sophistics. The emphasis is not accidental. Logic was taught as a tool of law and was, with grammar and linguistics, intended to teach students how to derive meaning from authoritative texts. Understanding how a word or sentence can have meaning is critical, as is valid inference; but understanding the subtleties of different kinds of scientific and sub-scientific reasoning is not. Moreover, Arabic linguistics also had disciplines of rhetoric and poetics that overshadowed the rhetoric and poetics derived from Aristotle. Islamic logicians recognized these facts and sometimes remarked that the major contributions of Islamic logic were in semantics.

Ghāzipūrī’s Tawṣīḥ is in Urdu, which is enough to identify it as an intermediate text. (The same is true of Ibn Sīnā’s text.) Primary texts such as the Taḥdībīh were almost incomprehensible without explanation. Students used texts such as the Tawṣīḥ to prepare for classes, and less experienced teachers doubtless used them as well. Vernacular texts also served the needs of students who had not yet mastered Arabic. Thus it was, for example, that logic texts in various Indonesian languages were published in Cairo for the use of students from Southeast Asia. Elementary logic texts published in India often have explanations of difficult words and grammatical forms between the lines.

Another feature identifies the Tawṣīḥ as an intermediate text: the cut-and-dried nature of the discussion. The commentary consists of explanations of terms, lists of distinctions, examples, and other explanatory material. In the charming manner of such texts, everything is explained; the commentary on the exordium, for example, contains an explanation of the demonstrative pronoun that turns into a discussion of the semantic relationship of the author’s words and the written text. There is almost no reference to real disputes or doubtful points, shuḥūk. These are the stuff of the advanced commentaries and occasional specialized treatise. Thus, the texts translated in this volume give a clear picture of the scope and established doctrine of Islamic logic but not of its disputes or darker corners.

In general, the execution of this book is satisfactory. Spencer seems to have a solid background in traditional European logic but not to be entirely in touch with current scholarship, a defect that shows particularly in the rather spotty introduction. Renderings of terms are usually satisfactory, though not always conventional, as in his rendering of taṣawwur and taṣdiq as “apprehension” and “assertion” rather than the more common “conception” and “assent”. Rendering badd, essential definition, as “boundary” is not very helpful. Rendering dalālah taḥbī’iyyah as “physical signification” is simply wrong; it ought to be “natural signification”. Other terms, such as “nota” for mashḥūrāt, things generally known, are old-fashioned. There are good indices,
which also serve as a glossary of the technical terms. There are few typographical errors.

Unfortunately, it is not clear how one would go about finding this book. There is no reference to it in *Books in Print*. Amazon.Com lists an out-of-print 1990 hardcover edition from University Press of America, but there is no evidence that this book ever existed. Amazon.Com.UK lists an out-of-print edition by the same publisher as my copy but of a different date. I found no copy in either the British Library or the Library of Congress, nor in an on-line union catalogue. I suspect that this means it was privately printed by the author and then never distributed. If so, it is unfortunate, since it is a valuable contribution to the scholarly literature on Islamic logic.

John Walbridge

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Hamid Algar, the author of this short treatise, is a reputed scholar who has been teaching a wide range of courses in Islamic Studies including *tafsīr, tasawwuf*, history of Islam, and Arabic, Persian and Turkish at the University of California at Berkeley. Credit also goes to Hamid Algar for having introduced to English readers a number of writings of the renowned Iranian scholar and thinker, ‘Alī Shārī‘atī by translating them into English. The name of Hamid Algar as an Islamic scholar and writer is too well known to the contemporary students of Islam to require any more details about him.

The above monograph has originated from a lecture of his and is addressed to introduce Imām Ghazālī (d. 505/1111). Within the span of 64 pages, the learned author has attempted to cover almost all the significant stages of Ghazālī’s eventful career and the important dimensions of his very rich thought. This achievement itself bespeaks the outstanding talent of the author. One should hope that perhaps Algar would find occasion to use his fertile mind and productive pen to introduce Imām Ghazālī’s life and thought in greater detail and produce a full-fledged, comprehensive work worthy of Imām Ghazālī’s greatness. The need for it seems evident since a comprehensive