objectivity but to refute the theory of matter or substance put forth by
nineteenth-century physics.

Despite what has been said above, translating Iqbal is, both from the point
of view of the beauty of his language and the profundity of his thought, no mean
task. Dar’s effort, therefore, deserves to be commended in every respect.

KARACHI

RAFIQ AHMED

Notices

Nicholas Rescher, AL-FARĀĪ, AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY, University
of Pittsburgh Press, 1962, pp. 54, price $4.95.

Al-Farābī’s contributions to philosophy and to the sciences, indeed, demanded
a handy but useful bibliography of all the works written on or concerning al-
Fārābī.

Professor Nicholas Rescher, Professor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh,
deserves our congratulations and gratitude for bringing out this excellent
bibliography of al-Fārābī. A versatile genius as he was al-Fārābī exerted immense
influence on both the Jews and Christians in medieval times. The Muslims them-
selves felt very much indebted to him for understanding not only the philosophy
of Aristotle but also the ideas of Plato and other Greek systems of thought
through his writings. He is generally described by the Muslim scholars as
“al-Mu’āllim al-Thāni”, the Second Teacher, considering him only second to
Aristotle. Avicenna.—al-Shaykh al-Ra’is, the Chief Shaykh—acknowledges
frankly that he failed to understand the Metaphysics of Aristotle even by going
through it for more than forty times and could understand the work only
through al-Farābī’s Commentary on the work which he happened, per chance, to
see in a bookseller’s shop.

Very few treatises of al-Farābī have, indeed, been so far critically studied
either in Europe or elsewhere. The contribution of Muslim philosophers in
general and that of al-Farābī in particular have, no doubt, remained thus far
unestimated. Only a few of the works of al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, Avicenna and
Averroes have received the attention of the scholars of the day.

Al-Farābī, as appears from the account given by the early biographers, wrote
two types of Commentaries of the Philosophy of Aristotle—(1) Commentary and
(2) Annotation. Maimonides popularised the works of al-Farābī among the
schoolmen who studied them with great interest and preserved them in their
Latin translations and even in Hebrew.

Professor Rescher’s bibliography is, however, preceded by the work of
Ahmed Ates, entitled “Fārābī bibliography” which appeared in Türk Tarih
Kurumu Billeten (Ankara), vol. 15 (1951), pp. 175-92. In this bibliography
Ates has listed all identifiable works of al-Farābī and given data on manuscript
locations and editions, where possible. Another bibliography of the works of
al-Farābī was published by Max Joseph Heinrich Hottan as early as in 1905
under the title “Das Buch der Ringsteine Fārābīs. Mit dem Kommentar des
Emīr Iṣmā‘īl al-Ḥoseini el Fārānī”, vide Zeitschrift für Assyriologie, vol. 18


Al-Fārābī, unlike Ibn Rushd (Averroes), wrote only two kinds of commentaries in Arabic on the writings of Aristotle. He studied the works of Aristotle with his Christian teacher Ābū Bishr Mattā b. Yūnus. His commentary on some of the works of Aristotle has been called "Charh", commentary, but his "notes" on some other Aristotelian works have also been mentioned as "Charh", such as Charh Kitaab al-Maqālāt li-Aristis 'alā jihat al-Ta'ālqa, commentary of the book on Categories by Aristotle by way of notes. To explain further, reference may be made to "Charh Kitaab al-ibārah li-Aristisātīlis", al-Fārābī's Commentary on Aristotle's Peri Hermeneias (De Interpretatione), published by W. Kutsch and S. Marrow at Beirut, 1961, which is a commentary or Charh in its true sense. But his "Charh Kitaab al-Maqālāt li-Aristisātīlis", published by D. M. Dunlop under the caption "Al-Fārābī's paraphrase of the categories of Aristotle", in Islamic Quarterly, vol. IV (1958), pp. 168-97; vol. V (1959), pp. 21-54, represents Al-Fārābī's short Commentary which gives his remarks and explanatory notes on certain topics dealt with in the book of Aristotle.

Professor Nicholas Rescher is to be congratulated for publishing "Al-Fārābī's short Commentary on Aristotle's Prior Analytics" in English. In his Introduction he has categorically stated, "Al-Fārābī wrote commentaries on the entire Aristotelian logical Organon (including the Rhetorica and Poetica), treating much of it in the triplicate manner typical of the Arabic Commentators (Epitome=Short Commentary, Middle Commentary, and Great Commentary)."