

***Islamic Thought in the Dialogue of Cultures: A Historical and Bibliographical Survey***, by Hans Daiber (Themes in Islamic Studies: 7) (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2012), xi + 274 pp., ISBN: 978-90-04-22227-4, €107 / \$149 (hb)

Hans Daiber's *Islamic Thought in the Dialogue of Cultures* is aptly named. This work is both timely and necessary in that it seriously addresses one topic within Islamic Studies that is all too often neglected or merely cited as a footnote to Islamic history: the very real historical relationship between scientific and intellectual disciplines in the Western European Christian world and the Muslim world. This collection of Daiber's detailed and insightful essays painstakingly reveals the depth and breadth of intellectual dialogue between Muslim and Christian intellectuals in the Middle Ages. While these contacts may not always have been in person, the extent to which Islamic sources have added to the development of science and philosophy in the global history of the advancement of knowledge has been sorely underappreciated, or at best has been noted in passing as a kind of historical curiosity. Daiber's volume is so rich with detail and historical nuance that it makes a major contribution in fleshing out the actual meaning and significance of the Islamic contribution to philosophy and science, instead of merely paying tribute to it in passing. This volume collects the most outstanding examples of Daiber's scholarship in this area. It is essential reading for anyone interested in the history of science and philosophy in general, or in the history of the major Islamic contributions to topics of universal scientific and philosophical interest.

The first chapter of the volume, "The Qur'ānic Background of Rationalism in Early Islam," presents a compelling description of the conceptual bases derived from the sciences of the Qur'ān that laid the groundwork for Islamic scientific advances. Daiber shows how the rigorous study of the Qur'ān undertaken by the earliest Muslim scholars gave birth to traditions of logical reasoning that enabled, and even necessitated, the development of scientific inquiry in the medieval Islamic world. As he insightfully points out, "research in the history of scientific thought in Islam appears to be a pre-requisite for a better understanding of Islam [in general]" (p. 6). Daiber's argument is highly important: it proves that the rationalistic bases of scientific

inquiry are not alien to Islam as such, but can be (and were) derived from the basic principles of a genuinely Islamic worldview. The second chapter of the volume, which discusses the rational patterns of argumentation in the classic *kalām* debate over human free will, further explores the place of rationalism in the center of Islamic intellectual history. The fourth chapter, "The Autonomy of Philosophy in Islam," also provides a detailed discussion of the place of philosophy as such (*falsafa*) in Islamic intellectual history.

The third, fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the volume provide an extremely useful collection of information on the historical lines of transmission and relationship between Islamic intellectual history, Western Christian intellectual history, and the intellectual heritage of the ancient world. Chapter Three, "The Encounter of Islamic Rationalism with Greek Culture: The Translation Period and its Role in the Development of Islamic Philosophy," provides a detailed and thoroughly documented summary of the 'Abbāsīd translation movement, including important details about which works were translated in particular and why some genres were more likely to be translated over others. This chapter serves as a very useful summary of this crucial period in Islamic intellectual history and is an excellent guide for any further research in this area. The fifth chapter, "The Encounter of Islamic Philosophy with European Thought: Latin Translations and Translators of Arabic Philosophical Texts and their Importance for Medieval European Philosophy. Survey and State of the Art," is perhaps the most impressive part of the collection. It is an extensive (77 pages) bibliography of studies on and editions of Arabic texts translated into Latin in the Western European Middle Ages. The section includes information on the Aristotelian and Pseudo-Aristotelian corpus transmitted into Latin through Arabic, Syriac, and Hebrew; the lines of Platonic tradition transmitted to Medieval Europe through Arabic; and Latin translations of al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and Ibn Rushd. To give just one example of the detailed contributions of this chapter, Daiber describes the highly interesting and important history of the *Liber de Causis*, which is based on an Arabic version of Proclus' *Institutio Theologica*. As is well known, the *Liber de Causis* was foundational for Medieval European scholasticism and therefore constitutes an important component of the history of Western European thought in general. The discussion provided by Daiber on this topic sheds light, therefore, on the Arabic Islamic contribution to a crucial component of the development of philosophy in Western Europe.

The final two chapters of the collection provide a powerful summary of the significance of this research as a whole. Chapter Seven, "Islamic Roots of Knowledge in Europe," provides a rich catalog of specific examples of Islamic scientific and philosophical texts that were translated into Latin in the Middle Ages and thereby became foundational for the development of science and philosophy in Medieval Western Europe. This chapter in particular might be of interest to a wide readership in the field in that it provides such specific and compelling examples of such an important phenomenon. The concluding chapter, "Manifestations of Islamic Thought in an Intertwined World," sketches the history of Western European intellectual interactions with Islam, and ends with a call for the study of Islamic civilizations within the context of an intellectual dialogue between Christian and Muslim civilizations that has been taking place since the beginning of Islamic history. This call is amply justified by the depth of Daiber's collection and constitutes the primary importance of this text: through rigorous and documented study, Daiber proves that in order to understand the history of philosophy and science in Western European societies, it is of paramount importance to understand the history of philosophy and science in the world of Islam.

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