

and al-Hujaymī could have played a part. However, none of the arguments so far put forward by the author and other scholars that the extant text of the epistle anachronistically reflects terminology and debates of an age later than al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī can be considered conclusive.

W. Madelung

RICHARD M. FRANK:

Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism in Medieval Islam: Texts and Studies on the Development and History of Kalam, Vol. 1. Edited by Dimitri Gutas.

(Variorum Collected Studies Series.) x, 392 pp. Burlington and Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005. £62.50. 00 86078 977 2.

This is the first volume in a three-volume set to be published by Ashgate. It features fifteen articles by the great scholar of Islamic theology, philosophy and mysticism, Richard Frank. In the particular case of theology (*kalām*), the work of Richard Frank (and that of notable scholars like Josef van Ess and Wilferd Madelung) lays down the foundation, especially in terms of establishing a methodology, for a more extensive examination of *kalām*, our understanding of which is still lacking in comparison with other areas of intellectual and religious knowledge in medieval Islam. Frank's articles still retain their impact on modern scholars and scholarship, despite the fact that some of them were written half a century ago. A number of these articles were originally published in proceedings or less accessible journals; indeed, the great contribution of this collection is that it makes these very valuable studies accessible to scholars who would otherwise have to spend considerable time and effort in locating some of them.

Dimitri Gutas has done a fine job of organizing the articles into relevant themes and topics. Articles 2–5 of this first volume comprise studies on the Graeco-Arabic translations and terminology: article 2 on Ishāq b. Ḥunayn's translation of Aristotle's *De Anima*; article 3 on the Oriental versions of Themistius' paraphrase of Book *A* of the *Metaphysics*; article 4 on the Arabic philosophical term *ammīya* and its use; and article 5 on John Scythopolis's use of *Enneads*, which, along with article 4, provides a context that explains the way such Plotinian terms and ideas passed, through the medium of Syriac, into Arabic. Articles 6–13 are concerned with theology and philosophy: article 6 discusses the early development of *kalām*, in particular as it relates to the concept of *qudra*; article 7 compares *kalām* and *falsafa* with regard to reason and revealed law; article 8 examines the debate within Sunni Islam regarding God's relation to the world and to man; article 9 is on the neoplatonism of Jahm b. Ṣafwān; article 10 investigates al-Ghazālī's concept of *taqlīd*, and article 11 examines his use of Avicenna's philosophy; articles 12 and 13 engage respectively two fundamental terms: *ma'nā* according to early grammarians, and *lam yazal* in theological discourse. The last two articles (14 and 15) provide an edition and translation of two short dogmatic treatises by the famous mystic Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī: *Luma' fī al-i'tiqād*, and *al-Fuṣūl fī al-uṣūl*.

Gutas is also to be commended for overseeing the production of the two exhaustive indexes (one on names and subjects, the other on Arabic terms), which make the fifteen articles searchable and enhance their usability for scholars of Islamic studies.

I should mention here that the first article, even though it is not a scholarly article *per se*, provides us with a valuable insight into Richard Frank's scholarly career and his interest in Islamic studies; it is a talk he delivered at the conference convened in his honour at Cambridge University in June 2002.

Suleiman A. Mourad

JOSEF W. MERI:

The Cult of Saints among Muslims and Jews in Medieval Syria. (Oxford Oriental Monographs.) xiv, 327 pp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. £55. 0 19 925078 2.

Josef Meri has written a richly descriptive study of the cultural practices surrounding visits to saints' tombs and other holy places in the medieval Near East, a phenomenon common to both Muslims and Jews and often reduced by modern scholars to one descriptive term, *ziyāra*. And while *ziyāra* is the central focus of the book, other practices and debates also make an appearance, making the study as a whole a valuable one for anyone interested in medieval piety in the Near East.

The book consists of five chapters sandwiched between a short introduction and conclusion. Chapter 1 traces how Jews and Muslims created and developed ideas of sacred space, in theory and on the ground, with special attention to Damascus and its vicinity and to written texts like those of the *fadā'il* genre. Chapter 2 traces concepts of sainthood and related practices, such as the veneration of relics and sacred biographies. Chapter 3 discusses the practice of visitation itself: the theological arguments for and against it and the rich literature testifying to the diversity of personal experiences that pilgrims encountered. Chapter 4 focuses on Jewish pilgrimage, and chapter 5 on the development of the phenomenon of shrines, a sort of catalogue or typology of medieval Islamic and Jewish shrines.

Readers should be warned that this is not really a thesis-driven book. There is no argument, no "point" other than describing the variety of practices that medieval Muslims and Jews embraced when encountering sacred space and holy men and women. Historians already know that medieval Jews and Muslims visited shrines and shared sacred space: this book shows in rich detail what that all involved and, to a certain degree, how that all developed over time. Despite the book's title, it is not a comparative study by any means. Indeed, this may be the book's most significant weakness: in trying to show how much Jews and Muslims shared in their "encounters with the holy" in the past, Meri inadvertently shows how separate the two worlds were. While Meri takes note occasionally of Jewish practices and similarities with Islamic practices, discussion of Jewish pilgrimage is mostly sequestered in chapter 4 or in discrete sub-sections within chapters. This, no doubt, is a result of the sources: that fact is we don't know that much about Jewish shrine-visitation in the Middle Ages, and most of it takes place outside Syria anyway (as in Egypt or Iraq). But it makes the author's final line (p. 287), "Jews, Muslims, and Christians shared sacred places and undertook sacred journeys together", sound more like a noble sentiment than a result of his data.

But it's the data that one wants this book for. Chapter 3, for example, is certainly the most delightful part of this book (with many delights in other chapters, too), filled as it is with accounts from the medieval sources of how