views (p. 161). The same reverence is found among Qādirī, Chishtī and other Sufi confraternities, and remained unabated in the modern period. Muḥammad Iqbāl (d. 1938) lauded not just Jāmī's poetry, but his vision of Islam as a religious, political and cultural framework that was tolerant, flexible and accommodating, and at the same time offered individual believers a distinct and cohesive sense of identity. Ultimately, Alam writes, Jāmī was as influential as he was because "his idea dovetailed so perfectly with the great Mughal dream of a versatile Islam, one that could adjust to the realities of lived experience" (p. 172).

The indigenization of Jāmī's legacy in varied cultural settings is the subject of several chapters. In Bengal, as Thibaut d'Hubert demonstrates, commentaries and translations of Jāmī's works—*Yūsuf u Zulaykhā* in this instance—cast him as a mediating authority between competing local religious views, crossing the boundaries between "the Quranic text and the vernacular realm" (p. 686). A similar trajectory is observed in Yiming Shen's chapter on the spread of Jāmī's works in China, evidenced in acclimatizing translations dating to the mid-seventeenth century.

The leitmotif of this collected volume is the susceptibility of ideas and concepts to the vagaries of context. The cantankerous, divisive Jāmī, whose anti-Shīʿī rhetoric is analyzed in several chapters, faces off with the tolerant, pragmatic Jāmī found in Alam's discussion. Likewise, his poetry is graded as less than stellar by some of the critics studied in Losensky's chapter and valorized for its peerless command of style and beauty elsewhere in the volume. That multifarious legacy is the hallmark of a reception history that strives to foreground the tension between concept and social context without attempting to resolve it, thus proffering a fuller understanding of the past. Although this review has not done justice to all the impressive scholarship displayed in this volume, it should suffice to show that our understanding of early modern Islamic history has just become all the richer for it.

Neguin Yavari
University of Leipzig

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2019.1577693

Knowledge and Power in the Philosophies of Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī and Mullā Ṣadrā Shīrāzī, Sayeh Meisami, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, ISBN 9783319711911, 227 pp.

With the great progress made in the study of Shiʿi Islam over the last few decades, the field is in a better position to devote careful attention to the specificities and nuances in the worldviews of individual Shiʿi thinkers. In this spirit, the present monograph analyzes the worldview of the fifth/eleventh century Fatimid Ismāʿili *dāʿi* and philosopher, Ḥamid al-Din al-Kirmānī, in comparison and conversation with the world-

view of the Safavid Twelver Shiʿi (mystical philosopher) Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi (Mullā Ṣadrā).

Both Twelver Shiʿi and Ismaili Shiʿi Muslims revere a specific lineage of descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fātima al-Zahrā and his cousin ʿAli b. Abi Tālib as his divinely appointed successors and as infallible leaders possessing comprehensive spiritual authority, divinely inspired knowledge, and intercessory functions in which they mediate the spiritual relationship between human beings and God. For the Twelvers, the Imam of the current age, a lineal descendant of Musā b. Jaʿfar al-Sādeq, has been in occultation (*ghayba*) for some 1,200 years; for many Twelvers, this Hidden Imam is generally represented by the Twelver jurists and clerics. For the Ismailis, the Imam of the time is a living descendant of Ismāʿil b. Jaʿfar al-Sadeq, who is either present and directly accessible to his community (as Aga Khan IV for the Nizāri Ismāʿilis) or concealed and represented through the mediation of his authorized *daʿis* (for the Tayyibi Ismailis). This doctrine of the Imamate, which revolves around the issue of rightful spiritual and temporal leadership in Islam, presupposes certain models of epistemology, theology, cosmology, and anthropology that ground the spiritual status of the Imams. Meisami's book focuses precisely on these background concepts underlying the doctrine of the Imamate as understood by al-Kirmānī and Mullā Ṣadrā within the Fatimid and Safavid contexts respectively.

The author presents a multifaceted argument through five chapters employing a comparative analysis of key texts and tracing the historical transmission of ideas from al-Kirmānī to Mullā Ṣadrā and thereafter. The first chapter is an introduction; the second and third chapters analyze al-Kirmānī's views on epistemology and the Imamate respectively; the fourth and fifth chapters deal with Mullā Ṣadrā's teachings on epistemology, the Imamate, and the continuation of his ideas among later post Safavid Twelver thinkers. The introductory chapter situates al-Kirmānī and Mullā Ṣadrā's ideas within the context of al-Fārābi's political philosophy and Shiʿi Muslim notions of authority. After reviewing the literature on both figures, Meisami introduces her comparative methodology. Drawing on Foucault's concept of discourse and power relations, she argues that al-Kirmānī and Mullā Ṣadrā each presented a "synthetic discourse"—meaning a fusion of rational arguments, theological ideas, exegesis, and mystical thought—which collectively generate a "discursive field" embodying power relations. In other words, by writing about the knowledge and authority of the Imamate, al-Kirmānī and Mullā Ṣadrā respectively generated a power dynamic around the actual figures of the Imam and his representatives.

In the second chapter, the author situates al-Kirmānī within the fifth/eleventh century Fatimid *daʿwa* before analyzing his cosmology and epistemology, with major focus on his concept of the human soul and its journey towards perfection. Al-Kirmānī advocated a hyper-negative theology in line with earlier Ismaili thinkers, but adhered to a Fārābian cosmology of ten celestial intellects mediating between God and human souls—in contrast to the single Universal Intellect and Soul of classical Ismaili cosmology. Meisami carefully shows how al-Kirmānī's idea of the human soul and its cognitive powers selectively appropriates both Aristotelian and Neoplatonic ideas and serves as a prelude to his imamology. Accordingly, al-Kirmānī

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2019.1601992 Published online by Cambridge University Press

rejects the soul's spiritual pre-existence and generally accepts the Aristotelian definition of the soul as the perfection of the body. He understands the soul as possessing the three powers of sense, imagination, and intellect in common with the Peripatetics while also holding that the soul becomes a likeness of its objects of knowledge through formally uniting with them. In a more Neoplatonic orientation, al-Kirmānī speaks of the soul achieving its own telos or perfection through a process of spiritual transformation or evolution, culminating in the soul's reception of spiritual emanation from the celestial world of intellects and its becoming a likeness of the celestial intellects. But, as the author demonstrates, al-Kirmānī departs from Muslim Peripatetics like al-Fārābi and Ibn Sina when he asserts the soul's need for spiritual knowledge as mediated by the Imams and the Ismaili teaching hierarchy to attain complete actualization as an intellect. Meisami also unpacks a difficult passage from al-Kirmānī to show how he differs from the Peripatetics with respect to how human souls receive emanation from the celestial intellects: while the Peripatatics only affirm emanation at the level of the human intellect, al-Kirmānī accepts that human beings can receive emanation at the level of sense and imagination without the mediation of their intellect. The author eloquently summarizes these ideas by expounding al-Kirmānī's esoteric exegesis (*taʾwil*) of the *āyāt al-nur* in the Qurʾān—where he portrays the Prophets and Imams as translucent lamps through whose mediation the intellectual lights and emanations reach other human souls. Throughout the chapter, the author shows immense erudition of Arabic Neoplatonic, Aristotelian, Peripatetic, and Ismaili sources and broaches topics that prior studies of al-Kirmānī did not address.

The third chapter focuses on al-Kirmānī's understanding of the Imamate in the Fatimid context. Meisami first examines the intellectual genealogy of al-Kirmānī's ideas of authority by presenting the views of al-Farābī, the Brethren of Purity, Abu Hātim al-Rāzi, Abu Yaʿqub al-Sajistāni, and Ahmad b. Ibrāhim al-Nishāpuri on divine inspiration and authority. Their discourses promote the idea that the natural and legitimate leader of humankind is distinguished by a divinely inspired soul and intellect—a person whom the Fatimid Ismailis identified with their living Imam-Caliph—using Neoplatonic, Aristotelian, and Qur'anic based arguments. The author then undertakes an inter-textual reading of al-Kirmānī's treatise on proving the Ismāʿili Imāmate, *al-Maṣābih fi ethbāt al-imāma*, and his magnum opus titled *Rāhat al-ʿaql*, thereby demonstrating al-Kirmānī's "synthetic discourse" on the Imamate. She first shows how al-Kirmānī incorporated Qur'anic themes, mainly arguing for an Imam to be present in the world to continue performing many of the roles and functions of the Prophet, that the Imam must be appointed by God and not the community, and the necessity of the infallibility of the Imam. Certain sections from the *Raḥat al-ʿaql* demonstrate the Neoplatonic facet of al-Kirmānī's imamology, especially the idea that the Imams are supported (*muʾayyad*) through divine inspiration and emanation—their souls being akin to transparent and luminous glass through which other humans attain spiritual benefits. At the end of this chapter, Meisami offers some important observations concerning how al-Kirmānī's Ismaili teachings may have been transmitted to Mullā Ṣadrā through the Nizāri Ismaili writings of Nasir al-Din al-Tusi. This section is quite valuable as the first comparative

analysis between Fatimid and Nizāri imamologies. While the theory that Mullā Ṣadrā received ideas from Tusi is not new, Meisami is the first to hypothesize al-Kirmānī as the source of this transmission and to strengthen the claim through comparative analysis.

In the fourth chapter, Meisami demonstrates how Mullā Ṣadrā's discourse concerning knowledge and the evolution of the soul connects to his understanding of imamology. In particular, she highlights a number of similarities between Mullā Ṣadrā, Tusi, and al-Kirmānī on the nature of the soul and its existential actualization as an intellect through knowledge by presence (*'ilm huduri*). She expands on how Mullā Ṣadrā synthesized a number of Aristotelian, Neoplatonic, Sufi, and Shiʿi ideas concerning the relationship between the soul, being, and knowledge, which culminates in the idea of the Imam as the perfect human being. It becomes apparent that Mullā Ṣadrā and Kirmānī understood the nature of human intellect in similar ways—they each affirm the externality of the agent intellect in relation to the human soul and link this agent intellect to the figure of the Imam. Drawing on Mullā Ṣadrā's commentary on the Twelver *hadith* work *Usul al-kāfi*, Meisami provides an account of his imamology according to which the Imams possess the perfection of human intellect, function as the "proof" (*hujja*) of God on earth, and constitute a distinct species above normal humans akin to al-Kirmānī's and Tusi's ideas. In this framework, the rational souls of the Imams are the hidden proof of God while the Imam in person is the manifest proof of God for humanity. Meisami also demonstrates that Mullā Ṣadrā, al-Kirmānī, and Tusi—each in their own way—conceive of the historical Imams as different instances of a unitary meta-cosmic principle of the Imāmate and comprise a species elevated over normal humans. As a believer in the occultation of the Twelfth Imam, Mullā Ṣadrā evidently extended some of the authority and attributes of the Hidden Imam to the jurists (*mujtahedin*), i.e. those who give *fatwa* and mediate between the Imam and the believers. In another key passage translated by the author, Mullā Ṣadrā refers to this same group as the '*ulama*' and situates their rank below the Prophets and the Friends of God (*awliyāʾ*). Meisami further shows how Mullā Ṣadrā invested these scholars with "absolute epistemic authority" and elevated their scholarly knowledge to the same level as the Imam's knowledge, specifying that the difference lies only in the their method of acquiring that knowledge.

The fifth and final chapter explores Mullā Ṣadrā's legacy by tracing his onto-cosmological ideas of Imāmate and juristic authority through Fayz Kāshāni (d. 1091/1680), Ahmad al-Ahsāʾi (d. 1241/1826), Hādi Sabzavāri (d. ca. 1298/1797), and Ayatollah Khomeini (d. 1409/1989). With respect to the latter three thinkers, Meisami convincingly shows that they each envisaged the Imāmate in cosmic metaphysical terms (otherwise known as *welāyat-e takwini*), with Sabzavāri conceiving of the Prophet Muhammad and ʿAli b. Abi Tālib as the manifestations of the Universal Intellect and Universal Soul respectively. These thinkers evidently understood the spiritual authority and powers of the Hidden Imam to be partially extended and delegated to the Twelver Shiʿi scholars; accordingly, the jurist-scholars are said to possess spiritual authority over the common people in a manner analogous to the Imam's authority over humankind. As the author demonstrates, this idea of del-

egated Imamate authority found its most explicit formulation with Khomeini, who considered the jurists (*fuqahā'*) as the "proofs" (*hujaj*) of God over the people just as the Prophet is the "proof" of God. In this way, the author reveals a clear intellectual genealogy from Mullā Ṣadrā to Ayatollah Khomeini with respect to juristic authority as the proxy of the Hidden Imam. The chapter concludes with a most accessible summary of the comparative resonances between al-Kirmānī and Mullā Ṣadrā.

Meisami's book certainly succeeds as an original contribution to our understanding of al-Kirmānī's and Mullā Ṣadrā's epistemologies and imamologies and stands as the first monograph devoted to comparing the teachings of an Ismaili thinker and Twelver thinker. Her argument embodies a careful balance of comparative philosophical analysis and intellectual history. The book's focus on specific topics like the soul, the process of knowing, the Imāmate, and delegated divine authority by way of translating and expounding primary source passages brings to light certain ideas of al-Kirmānī and Mullā Ṣadrā that have eluded detailed analysis until now.

At the same time, there are a few minor areas meriting greater detail in coverage. The section on al-Kirmānī would have benefited from a more comprehensive overview of his apophatic theology and his cosmology of ten celestial intellects for non-specialist readers unfamiliar with his worldview. Al-Kirmānī's refutation of the Druze doctrine concerning the divinity of the Imām-Caliph al-Hākim did not feature in the book but may be relevant to the author's argument concerning the relationship between imamology discourses and power dynamics. It would also have been interesting if Meisami had explicitly compared al-Kirmānī's understanding of the Ismaili *da'wa* ranks of *bāb* (gate) and *hojja* (proof) to later Twelver ideas of the Hidden Imam's deputies in the Safavid and Qajar periods, given how the Ismailis did delegate the Imam's powers and authority to the *da'wa* ranks. While she did make reference to Tusi's concept of the Imam's *hojja* (proof), al-Kirmānī also affirms that the Imam's *bāb* (gate) and *hojja* (proof) receive divine inspiration (*ta'yid*) from the Imam and act on his behalf in matters of instruction. Thus, a stronger argument can be made that both Ismaili and later Twelver discourses equally delegated and extended the Imam's authority and power to other parties and that Mullā Ṣadrā may have been drawing on Fatimid Ismaili understandings of the *da'wa* hierarchy. Finally, while the author's hypothesis that Kirmānī's imamology may have reached Mullā Ṣadrā through Tusi is well argued, there is little doubt that Tusi drew a great deal of his Ismaili knowledge from ʿAbd al-Karim al-Shahrastāni, whose writings seem to prefigure many aspects of Tusi's Nizāri ideas including his cosmology and imamology. Thus, Shahrastāni's role and ideas must figure in any posited transmission of Fatimid Ismaili teachings through Tusi to Mullā Ṣadrā. In any case, the above observations are all areas that Meisami or other scholars may pursue in future studies, for which the author's study provides a useful springboard.

Overall, Meisami has written a thoroughly detailed yet accessible monograph that presents new insights concerning Ismāʿili and Twelver conceptions of authority. The book's focus on the psychology and epistemology underlying al-Kirmānī's and Mullā Ṣadrā's respective theories of the Imamate provides readers with a more holistic picture of Ismāʿili and Twelver imamology. In terms of intellectual history, this study brings

the question of the influence of Ismaili thought upon Mullā Ṣadrā to the forefront and will hopefully lead to more studies documenting the relationship between classical Ismāʿili thought and later Twelver mystical philosophy.

Khalil Andani
Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2019.1601992

Handbuch der Iranistik, 2 vols., Ludwig Paul (ed.), Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2013 and 2017; vol. 1, ISBN 978-3-89500-918-1, vii + 488 pp; vol. 2, ISBN 978-3-95490-131-9 (hbk), 550 pp.

This imposing two-volume collection, weighing in at more than 1,000 pages, offers us the *Forschungsstand*—state-of-the-art overview—of *Iranistik*, the (ill-defined) field of Iranian studies in the broadest sense of the term. It does so comprehensively, covering pre-Islamic times as much as the Islamic period. Its contents show how far the study of Iran and what we now call the Persianate world has progressed since the publication of the *Cambridge History of Iran* (1968-91). The wide range of topics discussed by established, mostly German, scholars as well as a number of talented younger ones, indeed reminds one of the vastness of the Iranian universe, and reflects how in recent decades its study has proliferated well beyond history, language and literature. This handbook naturally covers these traditional fields, in addition to such categories as geography, religion and folklore, but it also addresses music, art and architecture, numismatics and material culture, film and the media, in Iran and Afghanistan, as well as in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Far from just listing the most relevant publications in the individual disciplines, a number of authors blend empiricism and theory to discuss, reflect on and, occasionally, problematize the nature and justification of commonly accepted disciplinary boundaries and categories of periodization, prevailing angles of inquiry, and gaps in the literature. Each essay follows the template of A, general overview, methods, sources; B, discussion of important research; and C, bibliography.

The fact that four years lapsed between the publication of the two volumes suggests the complexity of the task the editor faced. In the introduction to Volume 1, Paul explains how in 2009 he started with fifteen authors and one projected volume of 300-350 pages titled "Einführung in die Iranistik," "Introduction to Iranian Studies," which was supposed to appear in 2011. Time and volume wrought havoc on that idea. The project quickly mushroomed and, as Paul explains, overwhelmed by accruing topics and perspectives, he ended up overseeing the publication of a second volume containing another fifty-eight essays. In the complex and sprawling work that resulted he turned a handicap into a virtue by having most rubrics discussed