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Review

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not have uttered Muṣṭafā Kāmil's (1874–1908) immortal words, "If I weren't Egyptian, I would have wished to be Egyptian," he may rightfully assume a hallowed place in the Egyptian national pantheon. One suspects, though, that Iraqi nationalists will beg to differ.

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*Mirror for the Muslim Prince: Islam and the Theory of Statecraft*. Edited by MEHRZAD BOROUJERDI. Modern Intellectual and Political Theory of the Middle East. Syracuse: SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2013. Pp. xi + 465. \$49.95.

This timely edited volume aims at broadening our understanding of the debates, disagreements, and questions pertaining to the problem of Islam and governance. The volume varies in the originality of its thirteen individual chapters, and is overall stronger on topics related to Persian and South Asian thought. Most of the chapters do not present new research so much as build on (even republish) previous studies, which makes the volume primarily useful for undergraduate teaching purposes.

Asma Afsaruddin's chapter, "*Maslahah* as a Political Concept" (pp. 16–44), is mostly a historical survey from the earliest period of Islam of the use and function in governance of *maṣlaḥa* (common good, welfare, benefit), covering Sunni historical and exegetical works on the period of the Prophet and Rāshidūn; Shiite sources that show a combined concern for the right of 'Alī and his heirs to rule and the good governance that would have resulted; later political treatises like those of al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Māwardī, and Ibn Taymiyya; and modern discussions by Rashīd Riḍā, Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, and Tariq Ramadan. It covers a similarly broad range of topics seen to intersect the concept of *maṣlaḥa*, including the selection of the successor to the Prophet; the Quranic conception of "priority" or "precedence" (*ṣābiqa*) among the early followers of Muḥammad; the institution of early political institutions like the register (*diwān*); the grounds for distributing stipends and booty and suppressing civil war; the rational reasons for the caliphate; the place of pragmatism and moral compromise in statecraft; and, finally, the grounds for democracy in modern Islam. The breadth of coverage in this efficient chapter makes it a good introduction to a range of concepts and problems falling under the purview of *maṣlaḥa*.

Chapters three to six narrow the focus to premodern Persianate thought. Alireza Shomali and Mehrzad Boroujerdi's "On Sa'dī's *Treatise on Advice to the Kings*" (pp. 45–81) includes a thematic introduction and a particularly valuable translation of the eponymous treatise by the scholar and poet Muṣṭafā al-Dīn Sa'dī (d. 1291 or 1292), most likely the first of its kind into English. The authors point out the strikingly secular nature of Sa'dī's image of governance, seeing it as offering a social contract model of the legitimate relationship between rulers and ruled. Crucial to this vision is the non-legalism of statecraft and governance; the ruler's task is not to follow prescribed Sharia rules but to employ his own practical wisdom in the pursuit of justice and the welfare of his flock. This is portrayed as a secular kind of knowledge and activity; in fact, one of Sa'dī's aphorisms sounds strikingly similar to the moral constructivism of recent neo-Kantians like Rawls: "Hold sway over others such that if you were one of them you could tolerate such reign." Only if the king fulfills this obligation is he entitled to support and obedience.

The chapter by Sa'īd Amir Arjomand, "Perso-Islamic Political Ethic in Relation to the Sources of Islamic Law" (pp. 82–106), takes aim at a long-standing Western assumption that Islamic norms of government were restricted to the ideal theory of the caliphate and Sharia-based governance. This assumption, often shared by modern Islamists, has the consequence of portraying the vast majority of political regimes in Muslim lands as illegitimate from a religious perspective. Arjomand calls for a more historically and sociologically realistic approach and argues that, far from being a detested reality on the ground, kingship was valorized (alongside the Sharia and caliphate) as a permanent and God-given office necessary for securing justice on earth. Building on his recent work, Arjomand points to texts as *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, the *Golestān* of Sa'dī, Ibn Qutayba's *Uyūn al-akhbār*, Ibn Miskawayh's *Tahdhīb al-akhlāq*, and subsequent Persian treatises on ethics, collections from the chanceries, and

other writings on administration, to show that whatever continuity they claimed with pre-Islamic Persian and Indian tropes about kingship and the “circle of justice,” they also referenced the Quran and the Prophetic tradition. We must therefore not assume any intrinsic alienation from Islamic ideals in the practice of kingship.

Javad Tabatabai’s, “An Anomaly in the History of Persian Political Thought” (pp. 107–21), argues a bit more strongly for Persian exceptionalism in the history of political thought within Muslim civilization, positing that “the Islamic theory of the caliphate was never taken seriously” in Persia and that “no treatise on the Islamic theory of politics was ever written by an Iranian political thinker or scribe” (pp. 114–15), although he does make a qualified exception for the case of al-Ghazālī’s denunciations of the Ismā‘īlis. Rather, after the restoration of the monarchy in Persia, writers resurrected the ancient Sasanian theory of kingship in the advice literature and specific political treatises on kingship. Ibn al-Muqaffa’s letters, the philosopher al-‘Amirī’s *K. al-Flām bi-manāqib al-Islām*, and Nizām al-Mulk’s *Siyāset-nameh* are Tabatabai’s choices for Persian writers continuing to see kings as divinely appointed by enjoying a separate dignity and authority from prophets and priests. Only after the Mongols did Persian political writing take on a more expressly Islamic cast, according to Tabatabai.

Louise Marlow’s chapter, “Teaching Wisdom: A Persian Work of Advice for Atabeg Ahmad of Luristan” (pp. 122–59), builds on her highly regarded earlier work on medieval Islamic advice literature and is one of the volume’s more detailed and well-researched chapters. Nuṣrat al-Dīn Aḥmad (r. 1296–1330 or 1333) was an important ruler of the Kurdish Hazaraspid dynasty, with a widely documented reputation for justice and religious orthodoxy. A confident introduction to Aḥmad’s life and times is followed by a detailed discussion of a mirror, *Tuḥfeh* (Gift), dedicated to him. Marlow demonstrates that in a text of this political and cultural milieu addressed to a sitting ruler, historical narrative about sovereignty and rulership since the time of the Prophet formed a large part of the (anonymous) author’s expression of advice and moral idealism. Marlow’s exposition of the text is exemplary, particularly on its rhetorical, literary, and stylistic aspects. Long passages are translated, and technical terms are given both in translation and in the Persian original, which is particularly valuable as concepts like “sovereignty,” “authority,” and “dominion” are susceptible to very particular substantive associations.

The focus shifts to South Asia in Muzaffar Alam’s “A Muslim State in a Non-Muslim Context: The Mughal Case” (pp. 160–89). Alam argues that the Mughals developed a political culture and vocabulary out of three primary source materials: he charts the development of the Sufi theology of the “Unity of Being” (*wahdat-i wujūd*) under the Mughals, arguing that it was conducive to attitudes of openness and generosity toward non-Muslim subject populations; he gives an excellent, although concise, history of the reception and transmission of al-Ṭūsī’s *Nasirean Ethics* and its various local abridgements, along with some illuminating translations of imperial orders (*dastūrs*) to officials that show clearly the impact of the *akhlāq* tradition on Mughal ideology; finally, he charts the Mughal adoption and reintroduction of Persian literary culture as a medium for a shared, inter-communal elite culture. Profoundly learned and richly referenced, this chapter would be an outstanding introduction to Mughal political thought on an undergraduate syllabus.

From here the volume jumps into modernity, with Peter Gran’s chapter, “Al-Tahtawi’s Trip to Paris in Light of Recent Historical Analysis: Travel Literature or Mirror for Princes?” (pp. 190–217). Gran proposes that European lands were hardly terra incognita to Egyptians of the early nineteenth century, and that it makes more sense to read al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s *Takhlīṣ al-ibriz fī talkhīṣ Bārīz* less as a travelogue than as advice to Muḥammad ‘Alī Pāsha. Gran provides a persuasive account of the social, economic, political, and developmental conditions in Egypt during al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s time, and of the antagonism that had developed between the industrializing north and the still agrarian south. He addresses why al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, an Upper Egyptian, was serving a ruler hostile to the interests of his region and what he was doing in his epistle from Paris, suggesting (although he could have elaborated and substantiated this point a bit more) that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī used his descriptions of the situation in France as a cautious way of calling for republican reforms in Egypt that would benefit the southern regions neglected under Muḥammad ‘Alī.

Charles Butterworth turns his attention to the landmark work *al-Islām wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm* (1925) by ‘Alī ‘Abd al-Rāziq (1888–1966) in his chapter, “Law and the Common Good: To Bring about a Virtuous City or Preserve the Old Order?” (pp. 218–39). Butterworth pushes back a bit against the standard

view that ‘Abd al-Rāziq called for secularism in this work, inviting us to see him instead as someone trying to protect religion from political interference, rather than calling for absolute secular political predominance over religion. While sympathetic to his objectives, Butterworth laments ‘Abd al-Rāziq’s insensitivity to the opinions of his fellow Muslims and his failure to perceive that arguing about past institutions was not necessary for defending the modernizing reforms he wished to see, which cause he suggests he damaged for subsequent decades.

Bruce Rutherford’s chapter, “What Do Egypt’s Islamists Want? Moderate Islam and the Rise of Islamic Constitutionalism in Mubarak’s Egypt” (pp. 240–78), is a version of his article in *Middle East Journal* (2006). It provides a helpful survey of the theory of Islamic constitutionalism elaborated by such thinkers as Kamāl Abū Majd, Tāriq al-Bishrī, Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, and Muḥammad Salīm al-‘Awwa, and then examines the use of these ideas by the Muslim Brotherhood in the 2000s. The basic outline of the theory is that the purpose of government in Islam is to enact the Islamic legal system and that human reason should fill in the gaps of the Islamic Sharia on the basis of what is in the best interests (*maṣlaḥa*) of the community. This vision thus calls for strict restraints on state power, significant popular participation, and extensive civil and political rights. These ideas informed Brotherhood thinking in its “Reform Initiative” document (*Mubādarat al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn ḥawl maḥādī<sup>2</sup> al-iṣlāḥ fī Miṣr*, 2004) and its 2005 electoral platform. Although the events of July 2013 appear to have permanently sidelined the prospects for Islamic constitutionalism as envisioned herein, Rutherford’s research remains indispensable for the study of the intellectual currents leading up to the Egyptian uprising, and for evaluating Islamist reactions in the sphere of political doctrine to the 2013 counterrevolution.

Şerif Mardin provides similar background to the political ideology of Turkey’s ruling Islamists in “The Body Corporate and the Social Body” (pp. 279–96). He provides a fascinating discussion of the ambiguities of the concept of *millet*, and argues that for Erdoğan and his supporters, the sovereign people is not just the corporate “nation” of Turkey’s citizens, but a “society composed of Islamic bonding and sociability among Muslims” (p. 279). The chapter offers a helpful survey of conceptual changes in modern Turkey, including the absence of a notion of the state as a corporate body (as in Roman law), the shift in the language used to speak about public and social entities in late-Ottoman and early-republican Turkey, and the socio-political imaginary of Fethullah Gülen. Mardin points to a crucial aspect of modern Islamic thinking about the possibilities and limits of popular sovereignty—suppose the *umma* inherits the deputyship of God once thought to devolve directly onto caliphs, kings, or scholars (as argued by modern Islamic thinkers from al-Mawḍūdī to Ghannūshī). Would the *umma* then be all Muslims or just those suitably socialized and committed to the project of fulfilling the covenant of vicegerency with God?

Roxanne Euben’s chapter, “Cosmopolitanism Past and Present, Muslim and Western” (pp. 297–396), is a version of a chapter from her 2006 book and sits somewhat awkwardly with the rest of the volume. Euben looks for alternatives to Western ideas of cosmopolitanism (often inspired by Stoic or Kantian philosophy) in the “Islamic ethos of travel in search of knowledge” (*ṭalab al-‘ilm*) and in the dense networks established throughout Muslim and non-Muslim lands. She argues that studying this ethos provides an antidote to the image of Muslims as insular or only traveling for purposes of *jihād*, and also provides distinct visions of cosmopolitan moral, political, and cultural engagement in a post-national era.

The capstone is a chapter by Aziz Al-Azmeh entitled “God’s Caravan: Topoi and Schemata in the History of Political Thought” (pp. 326–97). Picking up on some of the themes raised by Arjomand, this chapter (also from an earlier book of essays) is the intellectually densest and boldest of the collection, and could have served as a powerful introductory chapter to the volume’s assumptions and ambitions. Al-Azmeh’s arguments defy easy summary, but his primary concern is to identify and critique a common set of assumptions and parameters that characterize writing on the history of Islamic political thought (e.g., Antony Black’s *The History of Islamic Political Thought from the Prophet to the Present* and Patricia Crone’s *God’s Rule: Government and Islam*). He identifies such tendencies as (a) seeing Islamic political thought as an integral whole with an *ex nihilo* origin in the career of the Prophet, (b) regarding it as having a unique singularity based on the Islamic fusion of religion and society, (c) assuming that the Quran has an unmatched force in explaining Islamic origins and political possibilities

(despite the fact that the early Muslim community did not possess a fixed scripture, much less legal code), and (d) seeing classical texts as revealing the (quasi-Hegelian) spirit and mind of “Islam.” These common methodological (or even ontological) assumptions lead to certain common themes and frames of history, viz., (a) the original egalitarian spirit of the Arabs embodied in Islam set against the later and essentially alien forms of kingship and imperial domination, (b) the antagonism between the acephalic Sunni scholars and any overreaching state authority, (c) the reduction of all legitimate governance since creation to “God’s rule,” (d) the notion of the Sharia as a self-enclosed entity, and (e) the exaggeration of the normative monopoly of the caliphate. Al-Azmeh’s alternative is difficult to summarize, but largely consists in a radical historicization of Islamic political thought and insistence that it not be treated as exceptional and self-enclosed but rather be placed in the larger Hellenistic, Byzantine, Persian, and Indian currents of late antiquity. The chapter is powerful and persuasive, but it would require further discussion to establish what implications his arguments have for scholars interested in Islamic political thought for purposes other than historiographical reconstruction.

To sum up, this volume cannot serve as a replacement for recently published survey volumes of Islamic political thought, particularly Crone’s *God’s Rule*, but would serve well as an introduction for undergraduates to the themes and traditions described in the above paragraphs, and its generous citations and references provide plenty of direction for further study.

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*Method, Structure, and Development in al-Fārābī’s Cosmology.* By DAMIEN JANOS. Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science, vol. 85. Leiden: BRILL, 2012. Pp. xiv + 433. \$221, €166.

The study of al-Fārābī has become a veritable industry. Damien Janos acknowledges as much when he observes, “The scholarship on al-Fārābī is increasing rapidly, and it is difficult to keep track of all the new studies being published on this fascinating and enigmatic thinker” (p. xi). The observation is clearly made with some feeling.

Janos’s book is his rewritten and modified McGill 2009 Ph.D. thesis. Endeavoring to do his revision was difficult for two reasons: firstly, this plethora of works emanating—to use an apposite term!—from scholars of Islamic philosophy worldwide, and, secondly, the fact that “virtually every aspect of al-Fārābī’s philosophical system is the object of controversy or serious disagreement among scholars” (p. xi). To give just one example, he notes that “the classification proposed by Mahdi appears arbitrary, and it is also on these grounds that one should regard Druart’s otherwise compelling interpretation of al-Fārābī’s metaphysics with some skepticism” (pp. 314–15). In the light of such perceived differences one does, indeed, begin to wonder whether, in this case, difference of opinion is a sign of the mercy of God or mere confusion. I do not propose to enter the arena of such differences but rather to show what makes Janos’s work different, to identify his aims, and, within his own set parameters, to disclose the elements of his success. Where appropriate I have used Janos’s own words to highlight the way in which he has built a magisterial contribution to Fārābīan studies.

In one chapter of my own volume entitled *Allāh Transcendent* (Routledge, 1989), I characterized our medieval Islamic philosopher as one who was in search of order. I suggested that this “search for order proceeded on two main fronts: political and theological” and I went on to examine our author’s writings and philosophy with regard to such concepts as the attributes of God, essence and existence, emanation, and proofs for the existence of God. I was particularly intrigued by his use of emanation and his emanationist hierarchy.

That was just one way of “doing” al-Fārābī, however. There have been many and diverse others. Janos perceives the need for a completely fresh approach. Noting that al-Fārābī’s “cosmology has not yet been the object of a specialized monographic study” (p. 1), Janos aims inter alia to (1) “provide a new interpretation of al-Fārābī’s cosmology and philosophical development through an analysis of