BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MEDIEVAL ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY
D. BLACK, CPAMP PROSEMINAR: APRIL 6, 2009

Reference works covering Islamic philosophy

(Includes entries on major Islamic figures known to the West.)
Bruccoli, Clark, Layman, 1992. (Includes many of the major figures among medieval Islamic philosophers.)
1996.
1982. (Excellent articles on Avicenna and Farabi; best overview of the latter’s biography.)
The Encyclopaedia of Islam. 2 Leiden, 1954–.
mutakallimin.)
Islamic philosophy.)
(Has a full complement of articles on Islamic philosophy, both by figures and by areas of philosophy.
Somewhat uneven.)
The Stanford Online Encyclopedia of Philosophy. First round of articles on Arabic-Islamic Philosophy is now
online.

Indices and Bibliographies

By far the best bibliographies are those of Druart and Marmura, now being regularly updated online by Druart. In
researching any topic in the field, the best course of action is probably to begin with Butterworth and the Druart-Marmura
articles and then check out Druart’s updates for more recent material.


bibliography is found in the Middle East Studies Association Bulletin 17 (1983): 8–24, 161–77.]

2006.

(1997): 175–202 (compiled by Druart; covers 1994–96). This ongoing bibliography has now moved to the
journal MIDEO (see next entry).

Dominicain du Caire 24 (2000): 381–414. (Updates from 1998– can be found online at
http://philosophy.cua.edu/Faculty/tad: see specific links under “Internet Resources”).

Internationale des Instituts d’Études Médiévales, 1999.

Index Islamicus, London, 1977–.

Répertoire bibliographique de la philosophie/International Philosophical Bibliography. Louvain, 1949–. Includes
section on “Pensée arabo-musulmane et pensée juive.”


**Lexicons**
Most of these lexicons presuppose knowledge of Arabic. Goichon’s two works also provide helpful information for more general readers. The *Vocabulaire* series is also useful for non-specialists. By far the best and most useful lexicons, however, are those compiled by Van Riet in the *Avicenna Latinus* series [see below under “Transmission”]—whether you’re interested in the original Arabic or the medieval Latin versions.


**Periodicals that regularly publish articles on Arabic Philosophy**
*Arabic Sciences and Philosophy.* 1991–. [Includes articles on Arabic philosophy, Greek sources, and also Latin versions and influence].
*Bulletin de philosophie médiévale*
*Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale*
*The Islamic Quarterly*
*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
*Mélanges d’Institut Dominicain d’Études Orientales (=MIDEO)*
*Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften*

**General Histories and Collections of Essays**
———. *A Short Introduction to Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Mysticism.* Oxford: One World, 1997. (An abridged version of the longer history; useful as a secondary source for undergrads.)
Medieval Islamic Philosophy: General Bibliography


*Reflections on the field:*

*Internet Resources:*
Aquinas and the Arabs (Richard Taylor, Marquette):
http://web.mac.com/mistertea/Aquinas_%26_the_Arabs/Aquinas_%26_the_Arabs.html
Averroes Database (University of Cologne, Thomas Institut): http://www.thomasinstitut.uni-koeln.de/averroes_db/
[excellent resource with great bibliography, info. on texts, translations, and manuscripts relating to the original Arabic as well as Latin and Hebrew translations.]
Islam and Science: http://www.cis-ca.org/journal/. [An odd online journal, which describes its mission as follows: Islam and Science explores, from Islamic perspectives, philosophical and religious implications of data that originate in the physical, biological and social sciences.]
Islamic Philosophy Online: www.muslimphilosophy.com. [A very uneven website run by enthusiasts not specialists.
Lots of fun things, like portrait galleries of the major philosophy, and lots of uploaded PDF versions of books, texts, and articles on which the copyright has presumably expired. Most of the featured articles on the main page are very uneven and not to be trusted. For bibliography you’re better off to consult Druart.]
Druart Bibliographies to date at http://philosophy.cua.edu/Faculty/tad::
A Brief Bibliographical Guide in Medieval Islamic Philosophy and Theology 2007 - 2008
A Brief Bibliographical Guide in Medieval Islamic Philosophy and Theology 2006 - 2008
A Brief Bibliographical Guide in Medieval Islamic Philosophy and Theology 2004 - 2006
A Brief Bibliographical Guide in Medieval Islamic Philosophy and Theology 2002 - 2004
A Brief Bibliographical Guide in Medieval Islamic Philosophy and Theology 1998 - 2002

*Anthologies including translations of Arabic Philosophy:*
Hyman, Arthur, and James J. Walsh, eds., *Philosophy in the Middle Ages: The Christian, Islamic, and Jewish Traditions*, 2d ed. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1973. [Still the best general anthology of medieval philosophy to include translations from Arabic and Hebrew, many of them originally done for this volume.]


McGinnis, Jon, and David Reisman. *Classical Arabic Philosophy: An Anthology of Sources*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007. [A very welcome addition to the field, the first comprehensive anthology of its kind by two excellent linguistics. Central works by all the major and many lesser-known figures; much of it is probably too difficult for undergrad teaching, however.]


Wippel, John F. and Allan Wolter, eds. *Medieval Philosophy*. New York, 1969. [Contains a handful of text in Arabic philosophy; now superseded by Hyman and Walsh but one of the first collections to include Arabic philosophers—this is the text through which I was first exposed to Arabic philosophy.]

*Transmission and Translation: Greek Sources; Influence on Jewish and Christian Philosophy*

Adamson, Peter, *The Arabic Plotinus: A Philosophical Study of the ‘Theology of Aristotle’*. London: Duckworth, 2002. [Excellent study; highlights the ways in which the Arabic versions differ from the Greek originals, in particular moving Plotinus closer to Aristotle.]


———. “Arabic into Latin: The Reception of Arabic Philosophy into Western Europe.” In *Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, pp. 370-404. [Contains an excellent chart of all the major philosophical and scientific works translated from Arabic into Latin—indispensable.]


Gutas, D. *Greek Thought, Arab Culture. London and New York: Routledge, 1998*. [The most comprehensive account of the translation movement, putting it into its historical, political, and cultural context and dispelling some long-held myths.]


Peters, F. E. *Aristoteles Arabus. Leiden*: Brill 1968. [Contains translated excerpts from the *Fihrist* for each Aristotelian work, with analysis of references to commentators and information on Arabic commentaries. Remains a very useful resource, though some entries have become dated through the edition of new texts.]


Wilson, Catherine. “Modern Western Philosophy.” In Nasr and Leaman, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 1012-1029. [One of the few overviews of evidence for knowledge of Islamic philosophy in early modern philosophy.]
Thematic Studies
[Most studies in Arabic philosophy remain focused on specific figures rather than on thematic topics/areas of philosophy. Brill publishes a series in the field, originally entitled Islamic Philosophy and Theology, then renamed Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Science, 1984-]


Individual Authors
[Note: The translations below do not include selections that are contained in the anthologies listed above.]

Al-Kindi
Translations:


Studies:


AL-FARĀBĪ

Translations:

Studies:
AVICENNA

Texts/Translations:


Studies:


———. “Avicenna on Self-Awareness And Knowing that One Knows.” In S. Rahman et al., eds., The Unity of Science in the Arabic Tradition, pp. 63–87.


**AL-GHAZĂLĪ**

*Texts/Translations:*


[Watt and McCarthy both include translations of the autobiographical *Deliverance from Error*.]


*Studies:*

Medieval Islamic Philosophy: General Bibliography


Studies:


Other Authors

Texts and Translations:

Studies:

Philosophical Studies of Islamic Theology (Kalām) (see also al-Ghazālī above):
Suggested Texts For Teaching Islamic Philosophy to Undergraduates:

The following texts are all self-contained and less technical than many texts in Islamic philosophy, and could easily be incorporated into general introductions to philosophy or surveys of the ancient and medieval traditions:

Averroes, *Decisive Treatise* (Hourani edition is very clear and reprinted everywhere.) This is probably the most widely-read text in Islamic philosophy; it contains Averroes’s defense of the rights of the philosophers under Islamic law and a general response to Ghazali’s charges of infidelity. Good for studying the relations between philosophy and religion.


*Ibn Sinā and Mysticism*. Inati’s translation of the last three chapters of *Ishārāt wa-Tanbihāt (Directives and Remarks)*, where Avicenna appropriates some Sufi terminology. The “eighth class, pages 69–80, focuses on ethical themes and eschatology, and is generally more accessible than most of Avicenna’s writings.

Brethren of Purity, *The Case of the Animals versus Man*. Translation of the central section of the *Epistles* of the *Brethren* containing a debate between humans and animals; raises issues relating to “animal rights” and the environment of obvious popular appeal.


Al-Kindi, *The Art of Dispelling Sorrow*. In McGinnis-Reisman, *Classical Arabic Phil.*, pp. 23-35. Both these works give basic summaries of ethical teachings and are primarily hortatory in character. Kindi’s work in particular has the tone of a popular ethics manual and is very accessible and untechnical.

Al-Ghazali, *Deliverance from Error* (in any version, widely reprinted). Al-Ghazali’s autobiography, detailing his career as a prominent Ash’arite theologian, his study and critique of philosophy, his breakdown and subsequent conversion to Sufism, is very appealing. Its prefatory sections describe a methodic doubt and quest for certitude that is highly evocative of Descartes’s *Meditations*.

Ibn Tufayl. *Hayy Ibn Yaqẓān*. A philosophical “novel” that details the life and intellectual development of a boy abandoned at birth on a deserted island, along with his subsequent introduction to civilization and return to solitude. Quite amusing and bizarre at times; translated into Latin by Pococke in the 17th century, possibly influential on Locke (see Russell above); also translated into English at the beginning of the 18th century, possibly influencing Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*.


Al-Rāzī, *The Philosopher’s Way of Life*. In McGinnis-Reisman, *Classical Arabic Phil.*, pp. 36-44. These works, like those of Farabi and Kindi, represent semi-popular ethical treatises. Rāzī’s is of special interest because of its discussion of the ethical treatment of animals (based on upholding Platonic transmigration) and its discussion of hedonism.

The old standby is, of course, the 17th Discussion of Ghazali’s *Incoherence of the Philosophers* and Averroes’s response in the *Incoherence of the Incoherence, “* (which reproduces all of Ghazali’s text). This contains Ghazali’s proto-Humean critique of causality and Averroes’s attempt at a rebuttal.
### Chronology of Medieval Islamic Philosophy and Theology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>632 AD</td>
<td>Death of Muḥammad</td>
<td>founder of the Mu’tazilism, first major school of Islamic speculative theology (kalām)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>642</td>
<td>Fall of Alexandria to the Arabs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>748</td>
<td>Death of Wāṣīl Ibn ’Aṭī,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>813–833</td>
<td>Caliphate of al-Ma’mūn,</td>
<td>founder of the Bayt al-ḥikmah (House of Wisdom), library, centre of translation activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>825</td>
<td>Death of Bishr ibn al-Mu’tamir,</td>
<td>founder of the Baghdādi Mu’tazilite school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>841/9</td>
<td>Death of Abū al-Hudhayl,</td>
<td>founder of the Basrian Mu’tazilite school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>834</td>
<td>Death of Mu’ammar</td>
<td>Basrian Mu’tazilite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>835/45</td>
<td>Death of al-Nazzām</td>
<td>Basrian Mu’tazilite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 801–866</td>
<td>Abū Yūsuf Ya’qūb AL-KINDĪ</td>
<td>first Islamic philosopher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>873</td>
<td>Death of Bishr ibn al-Mu’tamir,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>841/9</td>
<td>Death of Abū al-Hudhayl,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>834</td>
<td>Death of Mu’ammar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>835/45</td>
<td>Death of al-Nazzām</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 912</td>
<td>Death of Qustā Ibn Lūqā (Costa ben Luca)</td>
<td>translator and author of The Difference between Spirit and Soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.864–925/932</td>
<td>Abū Bakr AL-RĀZĪ</td>
<td>Persian Platonist philosopher, influenced by Timaeus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>935</td>
<td>Death of Abū al-Ḥasan AL-ASH’ARĪ</td>
<td>founder of Ash’arite kalām, the other major school of Islamic theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>870–950</td>
<td>Abū Naṣr al-FĀRĀBĪ</td>
<td>first of the major Aristotelian philosophers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 932–1030</td>
<td>Ibn Miskawayh</td>
<td>Eclectic philosopher focused mostly on ethical issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th-11th c.</td>
<td>Brethren of Purity</td>
<td>A rather mysterious and secret group of thinkers who wrote a series of 52 Epistles combining Qur’anic, Platonic and Pythagorean themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>992</td>
<td>d. Al-‘Āmirī</td>
<td>Persian philosopher and follower of Kindī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1013</td>
<td>Death of Al-Bāqillānī</td>
<td>Ash’arite theologian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1025</td>
<td>Death of ‘Abd al-Jabbār</td>
<td>Mu’tazilite theologian; author of encyclopedic Al-Mugnī, major source of information on Mu’tazilite doctrines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>980–1037</td>
<td>Abū ’Alī Ḥusayn IBN SĪNĀ (AVICENNA)</td>
<td>Ash’arite theologian; teacher of Ghazali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1085</td>
<td>Death of Al-Juwaynī</td>
<td>Ash’arite theologian, critic of philosophy, later converts to Sufism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1058–1111</td>
<td>Abū Ḥāmid AL-GHAZĂLĪ</td>
<td>First major Andalusian philosopher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1138</td>
<td>Death of Abū Bakr Ibn al-Sā’igh IBN BĀJAḤ (AVEMPACE)</td>
<td>Andalusian philosopher and patron of Averroes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1185</td>
<td>Death of Abū Bakr IBN TŪFAYL (AVEROES)</td>
<td>founder of “Illuminationist” (ishrāqī) philosophy, a combination of Avicennian and mystical thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1154–1191</td>
<td>Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī</td>
<td>commentator on Avicenna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1236; 1248</td>
<td>Fall of Cordoba; Fall of Seville</td>
<td>critic of philosophy, author of Refutation of the Logicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1274</td>
<td>Death of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1262–1328</td>
<td>Ibn Taymīyah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1332–1406</td>
<td>‘Abd al-Rahmān IBN KHALDŪN</td>
<td>author of Al-Muqaddimaḥ, a work on phil. of history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1492</td>
<td>Fall of Granada</td>
<td>End of Islamic rule in Spain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 An exhaustive list is found in pp. xv-xviii of the Cambridge Comp. to Arabic Philosophy.