Annotated Bibliography on Avicenna's Logic and Metaphysics: L - Z

First Part: A - K

   "In this article, the author studies some central concepts in Avicenna's and Tusi's modal logics as presented in Avicenna's Al-Isharat (Pointers and Reminders) and in Tusi's commentary. In this work, Avicenna introduces some remarkable distinctions in order to interpret Aristotle's modal syllogistic in the Prior Analytics. The author outlines a new interpretation of absolute sentences as temporally indefinite sentences and argues on the basis of this that Avicenna seems to subscribe to the Principle of Plenitude. He also shows that he has no valid proof of the modal conversion rules and that he uses some rather ad hoc distinctions to show that Aristotle's modal syllogistic is correct. The author also notes some interesting differences between Avicenna's and Tusi's approaches to modal logic."


20. ———. 2004. Probing in Islamic Philosophy: Studies in the Philosophies of Ibn Sina, al Ghazali and Other Major Muslims Thinkers. Binghamton: Global Academic Publishing. "Part I is devoted to Ibn Sina (Avicenna), noted for his refining the distinction between essence and existence, which constitutes the basis for his proof of God's existence and for his significant theory of the universals. The second part is devoted to Avicenna's theologian critic, Ghazali, noted for his argument that a necessary causal connection between natural events can be proved neither logically nor empirically. The third part pertains to various central themes in Islamic philosophy and includes discussions of the thought of such philosophers as Kindi, Razi, Ibn Tufayl, and Ibn Rushd (Averroes). It concludes with a discussion of on the issues that divided the Islamic theologians, namely whether the value of the moral act is intrinsic to it or whether it is solely derived from the religious law."

Contents:
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Preface VII; Avicenna's Division of the Sciences in the Isagoge of his Shifa' 1; Avicenna's metaphysics (from Encyclopedia Iranica) 15; Avicenna's Chapter on Universals in the Isagoge of his Shifa' 31; Quiddity and universality in Avicenna 57; Some aspects of Avicenna's theory of God's knowledge of particulars 67; Avicenna and the Kalam 91; Avicenna's proof from contingency for God's existence in the Metaphysics of the Shifa' 123; Avicenna on primary concepts in the Metaphysics of his Shifa' 141; Avicenna and the problem of infinite number of souls 161; Avicenna's "Flying man" in context 169; Avicenna's theory of prophecy in the light of Ash'arite theology 185;
II. Ghazalian Studies
The logical role of the argument from time in the Tahafut's second proof for the world's pre-eternity 207; Ghazali and demonstrative science 217; Ghazali on ethical premises 247; Al-Ghazali on bodily resurrection and causality in the Tahafut and Iqtiṣ'ād 253; Ghazali's Chapter on Divine power in the Iqtis'ād 279;
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23. Martin, Richard Milton. 1964. "On connotation and attribute." Journal of Philosophy no. 61:711-723. "This article is a historical-philosophical discussion of two works by n Rescher on the history of Arabic logic. The most interesting essays in the former work are Al-Farabi's discussions of future contingencies and of existence as a predicate, Avicenna's analysis of conditional propositions, and Averroes' extensional analysis of modal propositions. In the first of these essays, Al-Farabi rejects the Stoic interpretation of Aristotle's "De interpretatione IX", which restricts the principle of the excluded middle; and in the second essay, Al-Farabi tries to harmonize a number of apparent inconsistencies in Aristotle's logic and metaphysics. The essays on Avicenna and Averroes are interesting for their discussion of temporal quantification. The translation of Al-Farabi's commentary also contains useful historical information. The most interesting part of the commentary is Al-Farabi's treatment of inductive arguments."

24. McGinnis, J. 1999. "Ibn Sina on the Now (A new translation with commentary of a section of Avicenna's Physics)." American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly no. 73:73-106. "Ibn Sina's Treatise on the Now is philosophically deep analysis of Aristotle's temporal theory. The text is translated and discussed, with particular attention to both its un-Aristotelian and uniquely Avicennian aspects. Among the former is his conception of time as the flow of the now, a view found among Aristotle's later commentators, but absent from Aristotle himself. Ibn Sina's originality emerges
most vividly in his solution to Aristotle's paradox against a "flowing" or changing now ("Physics" iv 10, 218a8-21). Ibn Sina's answer conceives of the now analogously to our contemporary mathematical notion of a limit."


"Avicenna's discussion of space is found in his comments on Aristotle's account of place. Aristotle identified four candidates for place: a body's matter, form, the occupied space, or the limits of the containing body, and opted for the last. Neoplatonic commentators argued contra Aristotle that a thing's place is the space it occupied. Space for these Neoplatonists is something possessing dimensions and distinct from any body that occupies it, even if never devoid of body. Avicenna argues that this Neoplatonic notion of space is untenable on the basis of three arguments. In general he maintains that bodies' impenetrability is explained by reverence to dimensionality. Avicenna argues that the method used to arrive at the possibility of space is illicit, and so Neoplatonist cannot show that space is even possible. Thus, concludes Avicenna, Aristotle's initial account must be correct. The paper outlines the historical context of this debate and then treats Avicenna's arguments against space in detail."


"Nearly three hundred works have been attributed to Avicenna. Moreover, even if one limits oneself to Avicenna's philosophical encyclopedias, he wrote no less than three (extant) s ummas, whose content, organization, and presentation can at times differ significantly. Additionally, recent scholarship has begun making a case that Avicenna's thought underwent an evolution, and so the problems of dating his works (even the encyclopedias) and determining what are his "mature" views arise. In order partly to address this last issue, I decided to focus primarily on Avicenna's philosophical system as it appears in his most extensive and well-known encyclopedic work, the Cure (ash-Shifa), albeit in places drawing significantly on his other extant encyclopedias-particularly the Salvation (an-Najat), and to a lesser extent Pointers and Reminders (al-Isharat wa-t-tanbihat) as well as his Canon of Medicine (Qanun fit-tibb).

Unfortunately, this meant that I gave rather short shrift to Avicenna's shorter specialized treatises as well as his Discussions (Mubahathat) and Glosses (Ta'liqat), even though I recognize that these works frequently have a more fully developed presentation of certain technical and tricky points. Also because of this self-imposed limit, I have thought it prudent not to take up the issue of intellectual development, not because I deny that it occurred or that it is not important, but because in the end I think that presenting a roughly unified Avicennan system of thought as it is appears predominantly in the Cure will be more useful for those readers who are interested primarily in getting some initial sense of Avicenna's overall philosophy as well as providing a starting point for scholars who want to explore systematic developments in his thought.

Even limiting myself to the Cure, however, presented problems, for what one quickly discovers is that Avicenna is indeed a systematic thinker, weaving and interlacing a few very basic concepts, ideas, and arguments throughout a legion of diverse philosophical topics and problems. Consequently, in order to appreciate some move he makes, for example, in metaphysics, one must first understand the problem that he is addressing, which might have arisen initially in physics or medicine. Similarly, the value of some Avicennan notion, which might seem peculiar or even gratuitous-such as his doctrine of the Giver of Forms, which is virtually unique to his system-can be fully grasped only by seeing how it provides him with a single solution to a score of seemingly diverse philosophical problems that in fact Avicenna reveals to have a common ailment and so require a common cure. Moreover, often one cannot properly appraise Avicenna's philosophical contribution without first understanding the historical context and problem to which he is responding. In short, what I had hoped to be a relatively concise presentation of Avicenna's philosophical system quickly grew into a somewhat lengthy tome as I tried to provide the necessary pieces needed to get some sense of the beautiful and, were it possible, almost seamless mosaic that is his system. I can only hope that the present work does justice to the systematic nature of Avicenna's unique philosophical mind." (From the Preface, XI-XII)


"Avicenna is not only the greatest metaphysicians of Arabic philosophy, but through his excellent paraphrasis of Aristotle's "Metaphysics", he contributed to the knowledge of metaphysics among the Christian scholastics; and his influence on William of Auvergne, Albert the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus was quite strong. The present article analyzes the object and properties of metaphysics according to Avicenna; then it explains the structure of metaphysics, the four causes, the real distinction between essence and existence, and between the necessary and the possible, the proof of God's existence the attributes of God and the meaning of divine names, the origin of the world through emanation, divine
providence and the problem of evil. The study is mainly based on the *Kitab al-Shifa*.


Contents: A introduction to Ibn Sina's ontology 1; 1. Philosophical analysis and Ibn sina's essence-existence distinction 33; 2. The logic of Emanationism and Sufism in the philosophy of Ibn Sina (Avicenna) 57; 3. A third version of the ontological argument int eh Ibn Sinian *Metaphysics* 117; 4. The analysis of "Substance" un Tusí's *Logic* and in the Ibn Sinian tradition 165; 5. two senses of mysticism in the Neoplatonic and Sufic tradition 207-239.

"Summary: The enclosed collection of essays focuses on the ontology of the most important medieval Muslim philosopher, Ibn Sina (980-1037), proffering the theses that: (a) his ontology is incompatible with monotheistic theologies; (b) his cosmogony is not derivable from either Aristotelian or Neoplatonic systems; and finally (c) the mystical dimension of his system is in accord with monistic "nature mysticism," as classified by R. C. Zaehner*. In contrast to the views of majority of contemporary scholars that Ibn Sina's philosophy essentially follows monotheistic or Greek philosophical systems, this collection emphasizes his original contributions to ontology and meta-mysticism."* [Robert Charles Zaehner, *Mysticism Sacred and Profane. An Inquiry into Some Varieties of Praeternatural Experience*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1961.]


"This paper deals with the meaning of "wujud" and "mahiyyah" in various schools of Islamic thought. It begins by turning attention to the significance of this subject for Islamic philosophy as well as theology and even certain schools of sufism. It traces the history of the subject from Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina to Suhrawardi, Fakhr al-din Al-Razi and later Islamic philosophers such as Mir Damad and Mulla Sadra. The essay then deals with the basic distinctions made by Ibn Sina between necessity, contingency and impossibility which forms the basis of the ontology of Islamic philosophers."


This is a review article of: *Ibn Sina, lettre au vizir Abu Sa'd: Editio princeps d'après le manuscrit de Bursa*, traduction de l'arabe, introduction, notes et lexique, by Yahya Michot. Sagesses musulmanes 4.
"Yahya Michot's recent contribution marks an important advance in the study of Avicenna's life and thought, not only because it offers a critical edition, translation, and commentary of a relatively unknown letter by Avicenna (the Letter to the Vizier), but also because it emphasizes the importance of historiographical and philological methods. However, many of Michot's conclusions concerning the historical context of a number of Avicenna's works, as well as his decision to publish preliminary editions and translations of these works, are open to serious criticism. Many of these historical questions are addressed here, along with manuscript and recension studies of Avicenna's usul ilm wa-hikma and al-Ahd."

"In reaction to earlier scholarship on the role of Aristotelian political theory among medieval Arabic-writing intellectuals, this paper argues that another approach of those intellectuals might more profitably be followed: that of the role of rhetorical speech. That political speech is investigated in Aristotle's Rhetoric makes it a suitable candidate for such a pursuit. However, what the present investigation concludes is that even this aspect of political theory by way of the Rhetoric also was not perceived to warrant investigation among medieval Arabic-writing intellectuals. In a review of all constituents of Greek political theory as it is now understood, this paper finds that there was one aspect of rhetorical speech that captivated the attention of these writers: the use of the enthymeme in speech patterns. Drawing on the writings of Avicenna, the author concludes that, instead of the application of the enthymemic construction of political rhetoric, Avicenna perceived yet another arena for its applicability: the training of philosophy students."


"In the ten essays brought together in this volume, the author discusses different aspects and problems related to the intellectual history of Islam and centered around logical and philosophical issues. The guiding line is that Arabic logic is entirely western and has nothing to do with "oriental philosophy." Six of the essays have appeared in different journals. The first essay, written especially for this volume, gives a brief account of the history of Arabic logic. The other essays deal with particular texts and problems related to the writings of such thinkers as Al-Farabi, Al-Kindi, Avicenna, Abu 'l-Salt of Denia, Averroes. The book contains extensive bibliographical references, documentary and critical notes."

49. ———. 1964. The Development of Arabic Logic.
"The book begins with a chapter on the "First century" of Arabic logic which is understood to be a period of transmission, translation and assimilation of mainly Alexandrian Aristotelianism. The author relates how toward the end of the development of Arabic logic the initial relationship which logic bore to medicine, mathematics and astronomy was replaced by a new kinship with the Islamic "sciences" of theology, law, philology and rhetoric."


"In the past few years the Logic of Questions has come into its own as a branch of logical theory which has generated widespread interest and has been extensively cultivated (1). It is thus germane to call attention to the (relatively brief) treatment of the theory of questions by the famous Persian-Arabic philosopher Avicenna (980-1037) (2). In several of his logical treatises, Avicenna takes up the task of providing an analysis and a systematic classification of questions (3)." p. 1
(2) On Avicenna as a logician see N. Rescher, The Development of Arabic Logic, Pittsburgh 1964, especially pp. 149-155.
(3) Our principal sources are: (1) Danesh-name, anonymously edited in Teheran in 1331 A. H. (= 1912); tr. by M. Achen and M. Massi, Avicenne: Le Livre de Science, vol. I, Sections on logic and metaphysics; Paris 1955, pp. 84-85; (2) Kitab al-isharat wa- l-tanbihat, ed. J. Forget, Leiden 1892; ed. with the commentary of Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (b. 1201) by S. Dunya, Cairo 1960; tr. A. M. Goichon, Livre des Directives et Remarques, Paris 1951; see pp. 85-86 of the Forget text and pp. 234-238 of the translation; (3) Kitab al-najat, et. M. Kurdi, Cairo 1938; The material on questions is extracted and translated in a


"The distinction between existence and essence in contingent beings is one of the foundational doctrines of medieval philosophy. Building upon the Aristotelian logical distinction between a thing and its existence, Avicenna posited the distinction as a proof for the radical contingency of creation. However, one Islamic philosopher, who had an enormous influence on the development of philosophical discourse in Iran, subverted the traditional Peripatetic vision of reality and disputed the ontological nature of existence. Through a critique of the Peripatetic notion of existence, Suhrawardi denied that the term had 'reference' and demonstrated the irrelevance of the distinction for metaphysical inquiry, which should, instead, rely upon an eidetic vision of the 'hierarchy of lights'. The synthesis of these two views led to the crystallisation of Mullâ Sadrâ Shirâzi's famous doctrine of the 'primacy and systematically graded nature of being'."


In appendice: Traduzione italiana di *Al-ilahiyyat*, I.1-2 (pp. 69-82).


"Analysis of Avicenna's views on the subject matter of logic as presented in the introduction to the logical section of his "*Kitab al-Shifa"" -- the only part of this section that was translated into Latin in the Middle Ages. Attempts to clarify the distinctive character of Avicenna's account and point out Avicenna's emphasis on the intimate connection between logic and language. A brief historical introduction places Avicenna's view of the nature of logic in the context of Islamic."


"Our goal in this article is to show that the analysis of Avicenna's doctrine of perception enables the isolation of two distinct concepts of the image. In the first part, we examine the passages in which Ibn Sina characterizes the image, in agreement with the ancient conception, as the material replica of a concrete reality formed in the faculty-organs by reification. We then undertake to read his doctrine of perception in the light of the discussion of the essence or common nature, which in itself is indifferent to unity and plurality. This reading enables us to show that for Ibn Sina, the common element of the various representations--sensible, imaginative, and intellective--is the quiddity as it is in itself. Each of these representations adds to the quiddity an intention of universality or of particularity."


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A. Jourdain (Ed., transl.): Dhikr-i shamma-i ahwâl-i Abû 'Alî Sînâ / Biographie abrégée d'Abou Aly Synâ … (1813)
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D. Remondon: "Al-ahlâq wa-l-infi'âlât an-nafsâniyya". (1954)
W. Kutsch: Ein neuer Text zur Seelenlehre Avicennas. (1956)
D.M. Dunlop: Communication relating to Rylands Arabic Ms. 375. (1955)


"Avicenna refers on a number of occasions in his Book of the Syllogism to "the eminent later scholar" (al-fâdil min al-muta'ahhirin). At least three recent studies have argued or assumed that this eminent later scholar is Alexander of Aphrodisias.
It is argued in this article that Avicenna is in fact referring to Alfarabi. This has consequences for reconstructing the lost first part of Alfarabi's *Great Commentary on the Prior Analytics*, for highlighting certain aspects of Alfarabi's logical doctrines, and for understanding more about the relation between Avicenna and Alfarabi in matters logical.

"This study presents an outline of Avicenna's categorical syllogistic with divided modal premises. It is hoped that this will encourage further analysis of the system and, ultimately, the production of a formal semantics for it. The study also takes note of some of the problems in Avicenna's system which motivated the later logicians to introduce modifications into it. Finally, the study proposes translations for a number of the Arabic terms of art."


"The article deals with the principles according to which the first critical edition of the Latin medieval translation of Avicenna's De anima IV-V has been prepared by Simone van Riet (University of Louvain, Belgium). The main topics are: the 'double readings', the choice of the basic manuscripts, the two critical apparatus and the two comparative vocabularies. The article also provides a survey of the Latin medieval translations of Avicenna in general and indicates the main themes set forth by G. Verbeke in the introduction about the psychological doctrine of Avicenna."


"During the last years a critical edition of two important works of Avicenna according to their Latin medieval translation has been published: "De anima" and "De philosophia prima". This translation dates back to the 12th century: as far as the "De anima" is concerned the translation was made with the help of a Jewish philosopher, Ibn Daoud, who was probably assisted by Dominicus Gundisalvi. Both translations were very influential in the Latin West: the doctrines expressed in them were widely accepted (with some restrictions) and were never censured by the Church."


"Avicenna's appeals to thingness occur most densely in passages devoted to analyzing the relationship between efficient and final causes, an entirely Aristotelian topic. A philological question arises: should these passages be emended to real causality (sababiyya) in place of thingness (say'iyya)? I argue that the balance of evidence compels us to retain thingness. For Avicenna, thingness is the respect in which the final cause is prior to the efficient cause (as well as to the formal and material causes); existence, by contrast, is the respect in which the efficient cause is prior to the final cause. In fact, over the course of Avicenna's career a progression from the *kalam* problematic of say' v. mawgud to his own problematic of mahiyya v. wugud can be detected in his discussions of efficient and final causation."

Edited by Robert Winovsky.

Contents: Acknowledgments; A note on transliteration and citation; Preface; Dimitri Gutas: Intuition and thinking: the evolving structure of Avicenna's epistemology 1; Dag Nikolaus Hasse: Avicenna on
abstraction 39; Abraham D. Stone: Simplicius and Avicenna on the essential corporeity of material substance 73; David C. Reisman: Avicenna at the ARCE 131-182.


"My aim in this book is to present a history of the metaphysics of Abû `Ali al-Husayn ibn `Abdallah ibn Sinâ, known in the West by his Latinized name Avicenna. Since 1937, when Amélie-Marie Goichon published La distinction de l'essence et de l'existence d'après Ibn Sinâ (Avicenne), no serious book-length study specifically devoted to Avicenna's metaphysics has appeared. This is surprising enough given how influential Avicenna's metaphysical ideas were, but what makes it astonishing is that tremendous advances have taken place since Goichon's time in fields relevant to this topic. Those fields include - from the ultimate to the proximate, to use Avicenna's terms - the study of late antique Greek philosophy and the study of classical Islamic doctrinal theology, or kalâm; the study of the Greco-Arabic philosophical translations and the study of the philosophy of al-Farabi; and the study of Avicenna's metaphysics and the study of his intellectual biography."


"Both Aquinas and Siger were familiar with a fundamental disagreement within the earlier philosophical tradition concerning the subject of metaphysics: is it being as being, or is it divine being? if Avicenna represented one approach to this issue, and Averroes another, both Thomas and Siger were closer to Avicenna than to Averroes in their respective solutions. Nonetheless, each resolved the issue in a distinct way."


On the website "Theory and History of Ontology"

Avicenna (Ibn-Sina) on the Subject and the Object of Metaphysics

Selected bibliography on Avicenna's Logic and Metaphysics:

A - K

Translations of the Philosophical Works of Avicenna (Ibn Sina)

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