of the Ismāᶜīliyya, claiming further that the underlying religious doctrines of the Jābirian texts are as germane to the corpus as are their scientific and technological contents. The technical terms used to describe the anatomy of the eye, planetary conjunctions, and the theological formulations of al-Kirmānī, are evidence that the corpus dates from roughly the year 900.

3. "Studien zu Jâbir ibn Hayyân." Several points developed in the previous study, especially Jābir's connection to the Ismāᶜīlīs and the thematic unity of Jābirian science, are taken further. Kraus notes that the corpus seems to give preponderance both to alchemy and to medicine, and suggests that Jābir was a doctor who later turned to alchemy. He suggests that Jābir and his mentor Jaᶜfar are mystically one, in a way similar to al-Ḥallāj's famous proclamation of his union with God.

4. "Les dignitaires de la hiérarchie religieuse selon Ǧābir ibn Ḥayyān." Passages from *Kitāb al-Khamsīn* are translated and supplied with very rich notes. Here Jābir's enterprise is said to consist of the reconciliation of Islamic gnosticism with Hellenistic science. The hierarchy described does not reflect the social or religious structure of the Ismāᶜīlīs, but rather Jābir's attempt to promulgate a radically new doctrine.

5. "Zu Ibn al-Muqaffaᶜ." Two points raised by F. Gabrieli are criticized. The translator of Aristotle's logical works is identified as Muḥammad ibn al-Muqaffaᶜ, the son of the famous litterateur; the writings were translated from Greek or Syriac, not Persian, and represent the earliest stage of the reception of the Aristotelian corpus in Islamic civilization. Contra Gabrieli, who attributed to the translator Ibn al-Muqaffaᶜ the skeptical passages in the introduction to *Kalila wa-Dimna*, it is shown that these two had a Persian *vorlage*.

6. "Das Kitâb az-Zumurrud des Ibn al-Râwandî." In this, the longest study in the collection, Kraus publishes some extracts from the voluminous *Majālis Muʾayyadiyya*, again making use of a manuscript owned by his friend H. F. Ḥamdānī. This document reveals new information concerning the teachings of the archheretic Ibn al-Rāwandī, which, in turn, is of great value in assessing the role played by religious polemics in shaping the way Islam defined itself in the early stages of its existence. In effect, Kraus endorses the position of Saᶜadya Gaon, i.e., that Ibn al-Rāwandī and others as well put their own heterodox views into the mouths of the Indian "Brahmans." Kraus argues for an early date for this thinker (ca. 250 A.H.), and traces his evolution from criticism of the Muᶜtazila to abandonment of the faith, as well as the connections between his writings and some later accounts of the "Brahmans."

7. "Les 'Controverses' de Fakhr al-Dîn al-Râzî." A concise and rich presentation of the activities and views of a great and little-studied thinker, including an analysis and partial publication of a short autobiographical work.

8. "La Conduite du philosophe: Traité d'éthique d'Abû Muḥammad b. Zakariyyâʾ al-Râzî." This discussion of al-Râzī's *apologia pro vita sua* inaugurates one of Kraus' major projects (see also the following item), namely the publication and analysis of the works of the maverick philosopher and medical writer Abû Bakr Muḥammad (the name is displayed erroneously in the title) al-Râzî.

9. "Extraits du kitāb aᶜlâm al-nubuwwa d'Abû Ḥâtim al-Râzî." These passages, which record personal confrontations between the two Rāzīs, reveal Abû Bakr at his boldest, disparaging prophetic writings and asserting that the books on astronomy and medicine are of far greater utility for humanity.

10. "Un fragment prétendu de la recension d'Eustochius des œuvres de Plotin." A rebuttal of the claim of P. Henry that Eusebius utilized a purported edition of the *Enneads* prepared by Eustochius, rather than the only extant one, that of Porphyry.

11. "Plotin chez les arabes: Remarques sur un nouveau fragment de la paraphrase arabe des Ennéades." A major advance in Plotinian studies, with a wealth of detail concerning the readership of the Arabic versions of the *Theology of Aristotle*, the discovery of more Plotinian materials in a treatise attributed to al-Fārābī, and strong philological evidence that Syriac versions had sanitized the *Enneads* of pagan tendencies before they were translated into Arabic. This study was meant as an introduction to a major study that Kraus had prepared but never saw published; most of the same materials can be found in A. Badawī's *Plotinus apud Arabes*.

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Imaginal Worlds: Ibn al-ᶜArabī and the Problem of Religious Diversity. By WILLIAM C. CHITTICK. Albany: STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK PRESS, 1994. Pp. vii + 208. $18.95.

It is no exaggeration to say that the works of William C. Chittick stand in the forefront of the recent stream of serious scholarly monographs on Ibn ᶜArabī, among which must be mentioned Michel Chodkiewicz's *The Seal of the Saints* (Cambridge, 1993) and *An Ocean Without Shore: Ibn ᶜArabī, the Book and the Law* (Albany, 1993), as well as Claude Addas' *Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life of Ibn ᶜArabī* (Cambridge, 1993). The present work is the fruit of some twenty-five years of study of the works of Ibn ᶜArabī, complementing Chittick's earlier study, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-ᶜArabī's Metaphysics of Imagination* (Albany, 1989). Whereas the earlier work offers us a vast encyclopedia of the gnostic teachings of Sufism by way of careful selection and presentation, through introductory exposition, of passages from the *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, the present work is slightly more restricted in scope, being a collection of some of his most important and seminal essays on the Shaykh al-Akbar, originally written between 1984 and 1992 for conferences or edited volumes, but totally revised as independent chapters in this new work.

Since many of the theological problems dealt with are quite recondite, Chittick skillfully enhances passages of key quotations from the Magister Magnus with his own illuminating commentary on the subtle nuances of meaning. The first section of the book, entitled "Human Perfection," features four chapters on "Oneness of Being," "Microcosm, Macrocosm, and Perfect Man," "Ethics and Antinominianism," and "Self-Knowledge and the Original Human Disposition." Chittick's study of the "Oneness of Being," where some fifteen different connotations of the term in Akbarian thought are listed, is a—if not *the*—seminal essay on the philosophical meanings of *waḥdat al-wujūd* in Western scholarship. Also noteworthy is the chapter on "Ethics and Antinominianism," where Chittick tackles and refutes the criticism often made by Muslim jurists that from the transcendental perspective of *waḥdat*, normal distinctions of good and evil cease to apply and the prescriptions of the Sharīᶜa may be ignored.

Through the tapestry of the Shaykh al-Akbar's thought runs the thread of that subtle mode of understanding: imaginal reflection (*khayāl*)—and thus the second section of the book is appropriately entitled "Worlds of Imagination." In its narrowest sense, the word imagination, in Ibn ᶜArabī's thought, refers to

> a specific faculty of the soul that brings together sensory things which have shapes and forms, and consciousness, which has no shape or form. Thus dream images are perceived in sensory form, yet they are animated by a formless awareness, or, as the Shaykh often puts it, they manifest "meanings" (*maᶜānī*), which are supersensory realities.... In a slightly more extended sense, imagination refers to the realm of the soul, a level of being and consciousness that is situated between spirit and body. (p. 54)

In the first essay in this section, on "Revelation and Poetic Imagery," Chittick redresses some of the misinterpretations made by R. A. Nicholson in the introduction to his translation of the *Tarjumān al-ashwāq*, and while pointing out that the latter left out most of what was "interesting and important" in the Shaykh's commentary on his poems (p. 68), Chittick situates the Akbarian theory of poetic imagery in the context of the "intermediate worlds [of imagination which] have been all but banished from Western thought" (p. 69). This is followed by an intricate examination of the imaginal faculty (*khayāl*) and its relation to other key concepts: poetic taste (*dhawq*), spiritual "meaning" (*maᶜnā*), similitude (*mathal*) and theophany (*tajallī*) in Ibn ᶜArabī's works. Two other essays in this section, on "Meetings with Imaginal Men" and "Death and the Afterlife," represent important studies of the world of imagination in the context of Akbarian thought. My only regret is that Prof. Chittick did not choose to republish in this section his excellent study of this same world, "The Five Divine Presences: from al-Qūnawī to al-Qayṣarī" (*The Muslim World* 62 [1988]: 107–28).

The last section, on "Religious Diversity," with chapters on "A Myth of Origins," "Diversity of Belief," and "The Divine Roots of Religion," is an important addition to the study of comparative religion in the Islamic milieu; in many ways this section, by providing specific illustrations from Ibn ᶜArabī's writings, is much more useful than the more generalized treatments of this theme by F. Schuon and S. H. Nasr. Chittick's chapter on "A Myth of Origins" is particularly fascinating, especially because it addresses the fundamental problem of Islam's attitude toward other religions. While Ibn ᶜArabī did "maintain the particular excellence of the Koran and the superiority of Muhammad over all other prophets," he denied that Islam abrogated other religions or rejected "the universal validity of revelation or the necessity of revelation's appearing in particularized expressions" (pp. 125–26). The chapter concludes with a translation of "A Myth of Origins" of "revealed religion" (ch. 66 of the *Futūḥāt*) which, Chittick notes (p. 128), is slightly reminiscent of Ibn Ṭufayl's tale of Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān. In fact, the tale is also quite similar in form to, and possibly derived from, an allegory related by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī in the *Iḥyāᵓ ᶜulūm al-dīn*.[1] Chapter nine, on "Diversity of Belief," is another sensitive treatment of Ibn ᶜArabī's position on non-Islamic religions, examining the Akbarian notion of belief and noting that the idea that "all beliefs are true rises up logically from *waḥdat al-wujūd*" (p. 140). The belief of the ordinary (non-Sufi) Muslim, constricted by personal subjectivity so that "no one has ever seen anything except his own belief" (p. 150), is contrasted to the "nondelimited belief" of the perfect Sufi gnostics who recognize that

> all beliefs are true and lead to God. Through experiencing the unveiling of the divine self-disclosures, they understand the legitimacy of every belief and the wisdom behind every knot tied in the fabric of Reality, every possibility on ontological and epistemological delimitation represented by human subjects. (p. 154)

In the last chapter, on "The Divine Roots of Religion," the author describes the nature of each individual's religion as merely "a distinctive knotting of nondelimited Reality" (p. 163) and thus both as limited and as broad as imagination itself is. "The gods of belief are fabricated. Absolutely no one worships God as He is in Himself," Ibn ᶜArabī declares (p. 165). We are left with these words of the Shaykh al-Akbar as parting counsel: "Be in yourself a matter for the forms of all beliefs, for God is wider and more tremendous than that He should be constricted by one knotting (i.e., belief) rather than another" (p. 176).

In his introduction, Chittick points out that, on the issue of religious diversity, whereas "some Muslim scholars have tended toward exclusivism, some toward openness and inclusivism, and others toward a clear enunciation of the necessity of plurality . . . Ibn al-ᶜArabī represents probably the most sophisticated and profound thinker in the last category" (p. 6). Endorsing this point of view, I would maintain that *Imaginal Worlds* represents an invaluable contribution to understanding the encounter of traditional Islamic values with the sensate culture of today. As a contribution to religious studies in general, whereas works such as Wilfred Cantwell Smith's *The End and Meaning of Religion* and John Hick's *Problems of Religious Pluralism* have expounded tolerant philosophies of religious pluralism in a Christian context, *Imaginal Worlds* provides a fine example of how the multiplicity of religious traditions is acknowledged and understood by traditional Islam.

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[1] Book 35; vol. IV, pp. 217 ff. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.; rpt. of Cairo ed., 1352/1933).

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Reference Grammar of Amharic. By WOLF LESLAU. Wiesbaden: OTTO HARRASSOWITZ, 1995. Pp. xlv + 1044. DM 228.

This thorough and detailed grammar of Amharic, representing over thirty years of research, supplants all previous such works and so represents a significant event in the modern history of Amharic. It is yet another significant event in the career of Wolf Leslau (now in his ninety-first year), doyen of Ethiopian studies.

Amharic is an important world language of perhaps fifteen million speakers, somewhat fewer in Africa than Arabic, Swahili, Hausa, and Oromo. It is the second most populous Semitic language, after Arabic, and the lingua franca and constitutionally recognized national language of Ethiopia. Besides its status as an important national language and lingua franca of the Horn of Africa as well as Ethiopia, Amharic deserves attention as the most studied and best attested of the Ethiopian Semitic languages and, as such, is the best representative of this historically and typologically interesting group. With the appearance of this grammar, modern Amharic is perhaps now as accessible to comparative study as its much more famous cousins, modern Arabic and Hebrew, and perhaps more accessible than any other African language, including Swahili, for which I doubt there exists a grammar as thorough as this one.

The traditional territory of the Amharas is the mountainous north-central part of Ethiopia consisting of the regions of Begemder (Gondar region), western Wello, Gojjam, and Menz. Today, however, perhaps the majority of town and city-dwelling Ethiopians, except in largely Tigrinya-speaking Tigre province, are at least second-language speakers of Amharic. Despite the recent independence of Eritrea, one still often hears Amharic regularly in the streets of Asmara, and the influence of Amharic extends into the Ethiopian border regions of Somalia, Sudan, and Kenya. (Recently in Chicago I had a passable conversation in Amharic with a taxi driver from Somalia who had visited Ethiopia only once.) Except in the core Amhara areas of Shoa, Gojjam, and Begemder, Amharic speakers in Ethiopia are often bilingual, and probably most have another Ethiopian language as their native language.

There are recognizable regional varieties or dialects of Amharic: of Shoa, Begemder, Gojjam, and Menz-Wello, but the differences among them are minor, mainly concerning pronunciation. Not just the political capital, Addis Ababa is nowadays the focus of Ethiopian economic and social life, and its Amharic has become the prestige variety.

There are Amharic manuscripts from the fourteenth century, and publication in Amharic has increased steadily since the beginning of this century. There was a flourishing of Amharic creative writing in the immediate post-revolutionary period after 1975, and Amharic publications today include writings of all sorts: poetry, newspapers, literary and news magazines, drama, novels, history, textbooks, etc. Another product of the revolution was widespread emigration of Ethiopians; Amharic language magazines are now published in the U.S. and Europe to serve these flourishing Ethiopian populations.

In Ethiopia, Amharic has spread considerably into territory earlier populated by speakers of other languages—in ancient times the southern Agaw language of north-central Ethiopia, and since the nineteenth century, languages of the south such as Cushitic Sidamo and Omotic Kafa. As a result, Amharic has acquired considerable lexical and grammatical similarity with these other Afroasiatic languages, but shows surprisingly little of the grammatical regularization and thorough paradigm leveling often associated with extensive use as a second language—though, as in other Ethiopian Semitic languages, some Semitic features are leveled, including broken plurals and gender distinction in the plural verb.

Nor has considerable word-borrowing led to grammar change. Amharic has efficient word-derivational resources of its own, but can borrow words from Geᶜez with almost no need for nativization, a practice nowadays favored by purists for the satisfaction of needs for technical, political, or other new vocabulary. Borrowings from Italian during the 1936–41 Italian occupation did not at all penetrate the basic vocabulary, nor do words from English, the principal source of borrowed words nowadays, perhaps because the root-and-pattern morphological type makes the adaptation of Indo-european words somewhat problematic. (E.g.: derived by Amharic suffix, *sәra aṭ-әnnät* 'unemployment'; an English loan: *ṣošalist* 'socialist'; and constructed from Geᶜez words, *ṣärä abyot* 'counter-revolutionary'.)

A national language academy was established in Ethiopia in 1972, with the purpose largely of standardizing the language and, especially, of guiding the expansion of Amharic technical and scientific vocabulary, but after the revolution of 1975 the resources of the central government were directed more widely, toward publication, broadcasting, and education in as many as fifteen relatively populous Ethiopian languages. A massive nationwide literacy campaign from 1979 greatly, if superficially, increased literacy throughout Ethiopia, but benefits spread over fifteen languages probably still accrued mainly to Amharic, as the Ethiopian language in which motivated readers could best find materials to sustain and expand literacy.

It is doubtful if the pervasive spread of Amharic has significantly slowed in Ethiopia, and the availability now of Leslau's grammar, in the European language best known by Ethiopians—particularly its availability as a model for similar works in Amharic—may now play a significant direct role in appreciation and standardization of the language, and thus indirectly in its further promotion.

Leslau's *Reference Grammar of Amharic* is easily now the most complete, thorough, and up-to-date grammar of Amharic, far surpassing all previous works in its treatment of almost all grammatical aspects of the language. At 1044 pages, this is not surprising. The grammar itself is preceded by a brief introduction, with acknowledgments and a very complete bibliography of over three hundred items. Appended are lengthy indexes and twenty-eight tables that present the Amharic writing system and compare pronoun and verb paradigms (though paradigms are presented where these are introduced in the grammar).

Each section of the grammar is numbered and clearly labeled in a very thorough organizational scheme, and these numbers and labels also appear at the top of each page. Margins are generous but not excessive, page and print-size are adequate, and, while no doubt expensive, the high-quality binding permits the book to open at any page and lie flat. The thorough English index (61 pp.) makes the book a rich and ready resource for linguists doing comparative work, and the index of Amharic grammatical morphemes (31 pp.) will be particularly useful for those who read and translate Amharic, extending another indispensable resource already supplied by Leslau, namely, his *Amharic-English Context Dictionary* (1973).

Leslau mentions (p. xxi) that this work differs from previous grammars of Amharic in "the application of a different methodology, and in a much more detailed description of the phonology, morphology and syntax. Moreover, nearly every grammatical feature is illustrated by sentences referring to incidents of everyday life." The different methodology seems to be the expansion of coverage from traditional topics, mainly arising from the perspective of Semitic comparative grammar, to those which have a place, in their own right, in Amharic grammar. In addition to expected topics like assimilation, expression of the superlative, and word order, one finds, for example, a page and a half on "insertion of *n*, *r*," dealing with Amharic words differing in this way from Ge^{c}ez cognates; more than a page on metathesis, words in which Amharic has reversed the order of phones of the presumed Semitic original form (Leslau must have been making notes on these for years); fifteen pages on nominalizing suffixes (Leslau has followed the extensive work on Amharic nominalization of Olga Kapeliuk, e.g., Kapeliuk 1988); and an entire final chapter of ten pages on interjections. Information about dialectal differences is occasionally supplied, usually as footnotes. The thorough treatment of phonology, including how the writing system variably presents some of these intricacies, is another improvement over previous grammars.

There is appropriately extensive coverage of areas in which Amharic has particularly copious resources, such as derived verbal morphology, noun clauses, the syntax of noun and adjective clause (especially so-called cleft and pseudo-cleft sentences), and idiom formation with the verbs *alä* 'say' and *adärrägä* 'do'. Where there is variation, Leslau supplies the variants, as where some "impersonal verbs" are shifting into personals; for example, we find both impersonal *däkkämä-ññ* and personal *däkkäm-ku* 'I am/got tired'. Idioms, such as the expression of indefiniteness and adverbs, are listed and often exemplified at length. Regarding Amharic idioms, one resource absent in Leslau's bibliography may be mentioned here—the idiom dictionary of Amsalu Aklilu and Daňačäw Wärku 1986.

As mentioned, all exemplification is by "sentences referring to incidents of everyday life," a significant innovation in this grammar and heralded in Leslau's *English-Amharic Context Dictionary*, which also illustrates with original ordinary-life sentences. Leslau mentions (p. xxii) the special contribution of Yonas Admassu in supplying most of these excellent examples. Notice that exemplification is by *sentences*, which has added entirely helpful length to the book. On the other hand, unlike previous authors of Amharic grammars, Leslau has wisely avoided mixing etymological and other historical matters into the grammar. While these would undoubtedly have added usefulness and interest for many of us, they would also have added not-so-helpful length, and expense, for the majority of more pragmatically oriented users.

Especially welcome, and also different in this grammar, is the presentation of all examples in both Amharic orthography and phonemic transcription. As Leslau notes, transcription effectively overcomes the problem presented by the two main shortcomings of Amharic orthography: its failure to distinguish long and short consonants or the presence or absence of "sixth-order" vowels. In the past, by using Amharic orthography exclusively some grammarians side-stepped the problem—for those who lack Amharic phonological intuition—of knowing where long consonants and sixth-order vowels appear (even the best Ethiopian dictionaries won't tell you). Others, using only phonemic transcription, avoided the problem of deciding correct Amharic spellings of words with historically merged consonants (the best Ethiopian dictionaries sometimes err on this). Leslau has capably tackled both problems.