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**The Study of Avicenna.
Status Quaestionis atque Agenda***

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* This is an enlarged and revised version of a report on the subject I first presented at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa in the spring of 2007. I wish to thank my colleagues in that venerable institution, and in particular Francesco Del Punta and Amos Bertolacci, for the invitation and for the stimulating discussions that ensued.

INTRODUCTION

When I first published my book on Avicenna in 1988, the state of research on this most central philosopher in the Islamic tradition was, to repeat the charitable term I employed then, « rather confused »¹. It was necessary to find a stable starting point, an Archimedean fulcrum, from which the various problems besetting research could be identified and disentangled in order clearly to discern the course to be followed and avoid working in a circle. This I sought to detect in the understanding that Avicenna himself had of his own position in the history of philosophy, and specifically of the Aristotelian tradition, but also in the influence of this understanding on shaping the direction of his work, and in the ways in which he was accordingly led to communicate his philosophy. I stated all this in my Introduction, and I accordingly gave the book the sub-title, *Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works*.

The studies on Avicenna that have appeared since then, and to some of which I will refer below, show this approach to have been fruitful. In addition, the obstacles presented to the study of Arabic philosophy in general, and of Avicenna in particular, by some of the maladies that bedeviled it during the twentieth century — obstacles such as the orientalist-Eurocentric, Straussian-political, and mystical-illuminationist approaches, which I discussed elsewhere² — have largely faded into the erratic or ideological scholarly fringe, even if not completely disappeared. As a result, the way ahead is now discernible with greater clarity, though the work that remains to be done is still immense.

In a way, the tasks awaiting Avicennan scholarship are largely still those that were described by Kutsch in an apparently impromptu speech, delivered at the congress celebrating the Millenary of Avicenna in Tehran in 1954³. In a few brief paragraphs, Kutsch identified as most pressing the following four tasks for Avicenna research: (a) edition of the complete works, and indeed not only of those in Arabic, but also those in Syriac, Hebrew, or Latin translation ; (b) inventory of the manuscripts of Avicenna's works including the spurious

¹ D. GUTAS, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition. Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works*, Brill, Leiden - New York - København - Köln 1988 (Islamic Philosophy and Theology, 4), p. 1.

² D. GUTAS, *The Study of Arabic Philosophy in the Twentieth Century. An Essay on the Historiography of Arabic Philosophy*, « British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies », 29, 2002, pp. 5-25. For a resolution of the question of Avicenna's 'mysticism' see also, D. GUTAS, *Intellect without Limits: The Absence of Mysticism in Avicenna*, in M. C. PACHECO, J. F. MEIRINHOS eds., *Intellect et Imagination dans la Philosophie Médiévale*. Proceedings of the 11th International Congress of the SIEPM, Porto 26-31 August 2002, Brepols, Turnhout 2006, vol. I, pp. 351-372.

³ W. KUTSCH, *Aufgaben der Avicennaforschung*, in *Le livre du millenaire d'Avicenne*, vol. IV, Tehran 1956, pp. 187-191.

ones, with the understanding that in the then state of scholarship, the question of the authenticity of such works could not be resolved; (c) *edere est interpretari*: compilation of study aids (*Hilfsmittel*) and reference works for the edition and interpretation of Avicenna's works; (d) study of the sources of Avicenna (Greek, al-Fārābī), and his influence (in Syriac, Hebrew, Latin). As a general statement of desiderata, this is certainly true and perhaps adequate (if not sufficient, as I will next discuss); furthermore, for a more detailed description of general procedures in the study of medieval philosophy one can always consult the excellent introduction by van Steenberghe, which, though written with medieval Latin philosophy in mind, also applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to philosophy written in Arabic⁴. In the case of Avicenna, however, it is necessary to focus on the specific tasks that await Avicenna research now that the problems can be better identified and defined, thanks to the work that has been accomplished in the intervening half century since Kutsch. I will accordingly discuss in what follows, under three headings with a number of subdivisions, the research agenda that are peculiar to Avicenna. In the process I will be referring to some publications as illustrative of the points I will be making, but not to all relevant literature; the purpose of this essay is not bibliographical.

I. MANUSCRIPT TRANSMISSION OF AVICENNA'S WORKS; THEIR AUTHENTICITY AND THE PROBLEM OF PSEUDEPIGRAPHY

The manuscript transmission of an author's work involves (a) identifying the extant manuscripts containing it, (b) studying and comparing them to determine their age, mutual affiliation, and relation to the author's autograph copy or some archetype(s) deriving from it, (c) establishing the nature, extent, and recension of the text they present, and (d) evaluating them to determine the authenticity of the work involved. Activities (a) through (c) serve to establish a critical edition of the text that will form a secure basis for the study of the work. Activity (d) establishes the authenticity of the work and answers questions of pseudepigraphy. The study of the manuscript transmission of a work, an indispensable preliminary to textual criticism for the purpose of editing it, is a philological discipline that has been rarely engaged in in Arabic studies, whereas it has been at the center of classical studies since the Renaissance. It is highly advisable for scholars of Arabic texts, whether they wish merely to study or especially to edit them, to

⁴ F. VAN STEENBERGHE, *Introduction à l'étude de la philosophie médiévale*, Publications Universitaires, Louvain - Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, Paris 1974 (Philosophes Médiévaux, 18), 'Programme pour l'avenir', pp. 154-210.

familiarize themselves with this discipline as practiced in classical studies, by consulting some literature on the subject⁵.

1a. Manuscript transmission in Arabic. In the case of Avicenna, the study of the transmission of the manuscripts of his works is particularly important because of the very nature of their composition and diffusion. As al-Ġūzġānī, his disciple and biographer informs us, Avicenna did not keep copies of his own works; he frequently either gave the person who had commissioned a work his own handwritten copy or a copy which he had simply dictated; those who received such works did not, normally, share them with others; and through accidents of nature or political turbulence books of his were destroyed. In addition, it is clear that he also frequently copied himself in successive works, which complicates the textual integrity of the repeated sections and passages. And most importantly, we are not well informed about the transmission of the manuscripts of his works among his immediate disciples who were, after all, mostly responsible for their diffusion⁶.

Thus the major desideratum in Avicenna studies, a precise inventory and identification of his works on the basis of the transmission of their manuscripts, remains. We are in the possession of four such inventories with lists of manuscripts, thanks to the work of Brockelmann (*GALS I*, 812-828), Ergin⁷, Anawati⁸, and Mahdavi⁹, but these have to be updated with information from catalogues of manuscripts, especially from Iran and south Asia, published since their appearance. More importantly, however, there is need to go beyond mere lists of manuscripts and identify individual works and their transmission, by performing the activities (a) through (c) described in the opening paragraph of this section above. Mahdavi's inventory is the only one which provides some discussion and documentation in this regard, but it is

⁵ Such as, for example, for the history and the purpose of the discipline, the book by E. J. KENNEY, *The Classical Text: Aspects of Editing in the Age of the Printed Book*, University of California Press, Berkeley - Los Angeles - London 1974; for the textual critical method itself, the masterpiece of the late Scuola Normale Superiore professor (and in whose Aula, named after him, I had the honor to lecture), G. PASQUALI, *Storia della tradizione e critica del testo*, Florence 1952², and, for a more concise exposition, the handbook by M. L. WEST, *Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique*, Teubner, Stuttgart 1973. For a fundamental analysis of the historical and personal contexts that determine the nature of textual transmission and their implications for textual criticism see the unique work by S. TAMPANARO, *The Genesis of Lachmann's Method*, ed. and transl. G. W. MOST, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago - London 2005.

⁶ See the discussion of these points in GUTAS, *Avicenna* cit., pp. 79-80.

⁷ O. ERGIN, *Ibni Sina Bibliyografyası*, 2nd ed., Istanbul 1956.

⁸ G. C. ANAWATI, *Essai de bibliographie avicennienne*, Dār Al-Ma'ārif, Cairo 1950.

⁹ Y. MAHDAVĪ, *Fehrest-e noşahā-ye moşannafāt-e Ebn-e Sīnā*, Tehran 1954.

clearly insufficient. A significant beginning has been made with Reisman's study of the transmission of the *Mubāḥaṭāt*, which can be taken as a model for future work¹⁰. A similar treatment for the *Ta'liqāt* is imperative, some serious steps toward which have been taken by Janssens¹¹. Equally important work on the transmission of the manuscripts of the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Šifā'* was accomplished by Bertolacci¹². Michot has performed valuable work through his critical editions and translations of numerous smaller treatises by Avicenna in the *Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale* as well as of some controversies in which Avicenna was involved with his adversaries¹³. I have made a beginning toward a similar treatment of the transmission of *al-Hikma al-mašriqiyya*¹⁴. More sustained efforts in this direction deserve priority.

1b. Manuscript transmission in Syriac, Hebrew, and Latin. In addition to the study of the manuscript transmission of Avicenna's works in Arabic, there is imperative need to study the transmission of those works of his which have been transmitted in Syriac, Hebrew, and Latin translation. These translations were made on the basis of manuscripts which for the most part antedate those extant in Arabic — since the translations were made primarily in the 12th and 13th centuries, the source manuscripts could date from the 11th or 12th — and are therefore primary witnesses for the establishment of the text. The greatest advance in this direction has been made in the last decades by the publication of the Latin translations of the *Šifā'* in the Avicenna Latinus series, originally edited by S. van Riet and now continued by J. Janssens¹⁵. The Latin-Arabic apparatus

¹⁰ D. C. REISMAN, *The Making of the Avicennan Tradition: The Transmission, Contents, and Structure of Ibn Sīnā's al-Mubāḥaṭāt* (The Discussions), Brill, Leiden 2002 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Science, Texts and Studies, XLIX). See also T. STREET's review in « Journal of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations », 15, 2004, pp. 275-277.

¹¹ J. JANSSENS, *Ibn Sīnā and His Influence on the Arabic and Latin World*, Ashgate, Aldershot 2006 (Variorum Collected Studies Series CS843), articles VI and XIII.

¹² A. BERTOLACCI, *On the Manuscripts of the Ilāhiyyāt of Avicenna's Kitāb al-Shifā'*, in A. AKASOY, W. RAVEN eds., *Islamic Thought in the Middle Ages. Studies in Text, Transmission and Translation in Honour of Hans Daiber*, Brill, Leiden - Boston 2008 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science 75), pp. 59-75.

¹³ See, for example, Y. MICHOT, *Ibn Sīnā: Lettre au vizir Abū Sa'd: Editio princeps d'après le manuscrit de Bursa, traduction de l'arabe, introduction, notes et lexique*, Les Éditions al-Bouraq, Beirut 2000; Id., *Le Riz trop cuit du Kirmānī. Présentation, édition, traduction et lexique de l'Épître d'Avicenne contestant l'accusation d'avoir pastiché le Coran*, in special number 83 of *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique: Mélanges offerts à Hossam Elkhadem par ses amis et élèves*, ed. by F. DAELMANS, J.-M. DUVOSQUEL, R. HALLEUX, D. JUSTE, Brussels 2007, pp. 81-129.

¹⁴ D. GUTAS, *Avicenna's Eastern ("Oriental") Philosophy: Nature, Contents, Transmission*, « Arabic Sciences and Philosophy », 10, 2000, pp. 159-180.

¹⁵ For a list of these translations see C. BURNETT, *Arabic Philosophical Works Translated into Latin*, in R. PASNAU ed., *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010, pp. 818-819, and his reference to the forthcoming article by A. Bertolacci.

which these editions contain provides information about the readings of the source manuscripts from which the translations were made. Further work along this line is continuing by other scholars, such as the recent study of the Latin translations of the *Meteorology* from the *Šifā'* published by Mandioso and Di Martino¹⁶.

The Syriac translations — basically those of the *Šifā'* and, in essence, preserved in the writings of Bar Hebraeus, though the work of other Syriac scholars remains to be investigated — have just recently received much needed attention in the work of H. Takahashi¹⁷. For the Arabic into Hebrew transmission, M. Zonta's valuable work has begun to provide essential information. In the case of Avicenna, there were translations of parts of both the *Šifā'* and the *Nağāt*, and some passages from the *Išārāt*, though the transmission of Avicenna's works in Hebrew still largely remains to be studied¹⁸. But welcome as these studies are for having broached the subject of the Syriac and Hebrew translations of Avicenna's works, they must nevertheless be much developed for their benefit for the text of Avicenna to be realized.

2. THE PROBLEM OF PSEUDEPIGRAPHY

The problem of pseudepigraphy in connection with Avicenna's works presents itself in two aspects:

2a. *Avicenna's works attributed to others*; for example, (a) *Aḥwāl an-nafs* (*States of the Human Soul*), parts of which are attributed to al-Ġazālī in the latter's *Ma'āriğ al-quḍs* (*Steps to Sanctity*), though there are problems with the attribution of this work to al-Ġazālī as well; (b) the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (*Core Texts of Philosophy*), which are attributed to al-Fārābī. I discuss these two works below in section III.2b. (c) The *'Uyūn al-masā'il* (*Essential Problems*), which

¹⁶ J.-M. MANDIOSO, C. DI MARTINO, *La Météorologie d'Avicenne (Kitāb al-Shifā' V) et sa diffusion dans le monde latin*, in A. SPEER, L. WEGENER eds., *Wissen über Grenzen. Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, de Gruyter, Berlin 2006 (Miscellanea Mediaevalia, 33), pp. 406-424.

¹⁷ See H. TAKAHASHI, *The Reception of Ibn Sīnā in Syriac. The Case of Gregory Barhebraeus*, in D. C. REISMAN ed., with the assistance of A. H. AL-RAHIM, *Before and after Avicenna. Proceedings of the First Conference of the Avicenna Study Group*, Brill, Leiden - Boston 2003 (Islamic Philosophy Theology and Science LII), pp. 249-281; and Id., *Aristotelian Meteorology in Syriac: Barhebraeus, Butyrum sapientiae, Books of Mineralogy and Meteorology*, Brill, Leiden - Boston 2004. See also his very useful bibliography of Bar Hebraeus, H. TAKAHASHI, *Barhebraeus: a Bibliography*, Gorgias Press, Piscataway, N.J. 2005.

¹⁸ See M. ZONTA, *La filosofia antica nel Medioevo ebraico*, Paideia Editrice, Brescia 1996, pp. 163-164, 250; Id., *Fonti antiche e medievali della logica ebraica nella provenza del Trecento*, « Medioevo », 23, 1997, pp. 515-594, at 562-563 and note 138 for references to earlier literature. The Hebrew translation of the *Nağāt* by Ṭodros Ṭodrosi of Arles was studied in a Harvard dissertation (2010) by G. BERZIN, *The Medieval Hebrew Version of Psychology in Avicenna's The Salvation* (al-Najāt).

also circulated under the name of al-Fārābī, an attribution which cannot be maintained because first, doctrinally, the contents are a faithful summary of Avicenna's theories, though it may be argued that the work may be by someone from his 'school', i.e., by someone after him repeating in a concise manner most of his teachings. This may yet be the case and it will have to be investigated ; but the work as such definitely is not by al-Fārābī, as the style also indicates. Secondly, the transmission of the work also indicates its authenticity. It is contained in MS Istanbul University A.Y. 4755 (ff. 285v-292v), copied in 588/1192, where it is ascribed to Avicenna. This manuscript contains only works by Avicenna (with the exception of this contested work), apparently copied for the most part from Avicenna's and Bahmanyār's autographs.

2b. Works by others attributed to Avicenna. In this aspect of the problem of pseudepigraphy, a most pertinent example is the work known as *Ta'bīr ar-ru'yā* (*The Interpretation of Dreams*) by Avicenna's teacher in medicine Abū Sahl al-Masīhī. The inauthenticity of this work is shown by a number of factors: First, the list of the names of the 'divine power' suffused in the world which is given in this work (translated in my *Avicenna* cit., p. 275-276, L62) is different from that given by Avicenna in his last opusculum *On the Rational Soul* (also translated in my *Avicenna* cit., pp. 72-73). Second, the list of internal senses is different from that given in all of Avicenna's authentic works. And third, in his bibliography Mahdavi discusses the extant copies ascribing the work to him, none of which, he says, is older than the 9th Hiğrī century. By contrast, the work is attributed to al-Masīhī in al-Bayhaqī's *Tatimmat Şiwān al-ħikma* (§47) and by Ibn Abī Uşaybi'a, I, 328, 25 (Müller).

A second example is provided by the work known as *al-'Ilm al-ladunī* (*Transcendental Knowledge*) by al-Ġazālī or his school, which is attributed to Avicenna in only one relatively late manuscript that is not at all authoritative¹⁹; but the fact even of this misattribution shows how common the practice was of attributing works by others to Avicenna.

2c. Significance. The question of pseudepigraphy of Avicenna's works is thus a serious subject, with many implications. For the most part, the topic has been broached only incidentally until now, by authors discussing en passant whether a work is by Avicenna or not. The most comprehensive bibliographer of Avicenna's works, Yaħyá Mahdavi, did try to list the works according to their authenticity, and his remarks are quite valuable, but much

¹⁹ Istanbul, Hamidiye 1452 ; see MAHDAVĪ, *Fehrest* cit., no. 187 (p. 282) ; ANAWATI, *Essai* cit., no. 231 ; ERGIN, *Bibliyografya* cit., no. 119.

more needs to be done. It is only recently that David Reisman raised the problem in a comprehensive manner. Reisman made some preliminary remarks on terminology, in particular being careful to distinguish between pseudepigraphy and forgery as based on intention: the former is accidental, the latter deliberate. However, in both cases the effect that these two false attributions have on the history of philosophy is substantial, and therefore to be taken into consideration. Reisman then went on to discuss the two ways available to scholarship to determine authenticity, internal and external evidence²⁰. Here I would like to make a few more comments about the significance of the subject as it affects the history of philosophy in the Islamic world after Avicenna.

By now it appears well established that the philosophy of Avicenna generated such immense shock waves in subsequent intellectual history that its aftereffects continued to be felt until modern times. Avicenna put philosophy squarely at the center of Islamic intellectual life. Before him, philosophy had gained steadily ground in Baghdad ever since it was first introduced formally by al-Kindī, while the disintegration of the central authority of the ‘Abbāsid caliphate in the capital — during the Būyid century (945-1055) until the advent of the Seljuqs — brought to prominence the provincial centers in the periphery, from Buḥārā to Cordova, where philosophy, along with the other sciences of the ancients, were cultivated by the majority of the intellectual elite under patronage by local rulers eager to emulate the glory and prestige of Baghdad. This development is precisely the social and historical context responsible for the appearance of someone like Avicenna in the provincial capital of Buḥārā under the Samanids. His philosophy achieved the unification of the previous philosophical strands, eliminating what was not mainstream and the possible objections of others; it was expressed in various kinds of language, addressing thinkers in various fields in Islamic intellectual life, prominently theologians and mystics; and it presented a rational and systematic view of the universe that incorporated and explained the data of revelation, and indeed of all religious and hence social life. As a result, it may not be an exaggeration to say that all intellectuals after him had to take a stand with respect to his philosophy: accept it, reject it, or modify it, but whatever the case, they all appropriated it. Everybody wanted a piece of Avicenna.

The question for our purposes at this stage is, how did this climate affect the manuscript transmission of his works? Clearly his followers would want to transmit them faithfully, but given the state of Avicenna’s haphazard methods of composition, the opportunities were present for all

²⁰ D. C. REISMAN, *The Pseudo-Avicennan Corpus I: Methodological Considerations*, in J. MCGINNIS, with the assistance of D. C. REISMAN, *Interpreting Avicenna: Science and Philosophy in Medieval Islam*. Proceedings of the Second Conference of the Avicenna Study Group, Brill, Leiden - Boston 2004, pp. 3-21.

sorts of pseudepigraphy to happen. Opponents of Avicenna, or revisionists who felt that Avicenna could be harnessed to justify their views, could easily forge treatises that were in fact based on the works of Avicenna with perhaps some very slight changes in the text, or fragment his works and present only those chapters which they thought represented their views or interests. It is in such a way that the different recensions, plagiarisms, and fragmentation of his works (to be mentioned below in section III.2) may have taken place. The same applies for the misattribution of the works by Avicenna to others and those by others to Avicenna. Thus the study of the transmission of the works of Avicenna is intimately related to the intellectual history of the Islamic world in the three or four centuries after his death. If we can trace the circles and trends which generated pseudepigraphous works by Avicenna, then we can get a better idea of their philosophical positions and orientations. The struggle between opponents and supporters of Avicenna is, *grosso modo*, a reflection of the philosophical debates in the centuries after Avicenna's death.

II. STUDY AND TRANSLATION OF AVICENNA'S WORKS

1. *Studies.* In tandem with philological studies of the manuscripts of Avicenna's works there is need for historical and philosophical studies to map out his basic doctrines and deepen their understanding. This area has been happily better cultivated in recent decades and its importance is better understood, and accordingly I do not need to dwell on it at length: the studies, for example, by Bertolacci and Wisnovsky on metaphysics — a field that has seen particular cultivation in the past decade²¹ —, by Hasnawi and McGinnis on physics, by Black and Sebtî on psychology, by Aouad and Würsch on rhetoric, by Street²² and Thom on logic, and by Janssens on various fields, to mention only a few among the most prominent, are well known.

²¹ Incredibly, in the short period of six years between 2002 and 2007 there appeared four translations of the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Šifā'*: the three well known ones by O. LIZZINI, *Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā), Metafisica, La Scienze delle cose divine (al-Ilāhiyyāt) dal Libro della Guarigione (Kitāb al-Šifā')*, Bompiani, Milano 2002, M. E. MARMURA, *Avicenna, The Metaphysics of The Healing. A parallel English-Arabic text*, Brigham Young University Press, Provo (Utah) 2005, and A. BERTOLACCI, *Libro della Guarigione, Le Cose Divine di Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā)*, UTET, Torino 2007, and the Turkish one by E. DEMİRLİ, Ö. TÜRKER, *Kitabu's Šifā, Metafizik*, Istanbul 2005. This, coupled with the medieval Latin translation and the earlier modern translations by M. HORTEN, *Die Metaphysik Avicennas enthalend die Metaphysik, Theologie, Kosmologie und Ethik*, Leipzig 1907 and G. C. ANAWATI, *Avicenne, La Métaphysique du Shifā'*. Livres I à V, Vrin, Paris 1978, Id., *Avicenne, La Métaphysique du Shifā'*. Livres VI à X, Vrin, Paris 1985, makes Avicenna's *Ilāhiyyāt* the most widely translated work of Arabic philosophy.

²² For example, see in particular Tony Street's contribution to this volume for the significance of substantive and philosophical studies for the history of the transmission of the text and its establishment.

Similar serious attention is also being paid to the other aspect of the study of Avicenna, his sources²³ and his influence, both in Arabic and in other languages. With regard to his influence in the Islamic world in particular there has been a surge in the study of philosophy after Avicenna, of what I have called, deliberately provocatively, its « golden age »²⁴. Here I will mention only the project on post-Avicenna philosophy in process at McGill, under the direction of R. Wisnovsky²⁵. Avicenna's influence in Syriac and Latin is just now beginning to be the focus of attention, as mentioned above in Section I.1b, but that on Latin philosophy has been vigorously investigated in various fields, in physics²⁶, the theory of the soul²⁷, metaphysics²⁸, and even with regard to the late reception in Europe of Avicenna's *al-Ma'ād*, in an original contribution by Michot²⁹. All these efforts are welcome, as is every indication that they will be continued.

2. *Translations.* Translations of Avicenna's works into modern languages are necessary and sporadically they are being produced. I would, however, like to insist on the necessity for *annotated* translations of all his works. By annotated I mean both textually and doctrinally, especially the former. We are still a long way from possessing a critical and accurate knowledge of Avicenna's thought in its details, and reading his works in Arabic only can

²³ See, for example, A. BERTOLACCI, *Ammonius and al-Fārābī: The Sources of Avicenna's Concept of Metaphysics*, « Quaestio », 5, 2005, pp. 287-305; Y. MICHOT, *Al-Fārābī and his Influence on the Early Avicenna: The Evidence from the Kitāb al-mabda' wa'l-ma'ād*, in F. TERKAN, S. KORKUT eds., *Proceedings of the International Al-Fārābī Symposium, Ankara, October 7-8, 2004*, Elis Yayınları, Ankara 2005, pp. 327-340.

²⁴ D. GUTAS, *The Heritage of Avicenna: The Golden Age of Arabic Philosophy, 1000 - ca. 1350*, in J. L. JANSSENS, D. DE SMET eds., *Avicenna and His Heritage. Acts of the International Colloquium, Leuven - Louvain-la-Neuve, September 8 - September 11, 1999*, Leuven University Press, Leuven 2002, pp. 81-97.

²⁵ The project is called «The Post-classical Islamic Philosophical Database Initiative» (PIPDI) and can be visited at, <http://islamsci.mcgill.ca/RASI/pipdi.html>.

²⁶ J. L. JANSSENS, *The Reception of Avicenna's Physics in the Latin Middle Ages*, in A. VROLIJK, J. P. HOGENDIJK eds., *O Ye Gentlemen: Arabic Studies on Science and Literary Culture in Honour of Remke Kruk*, Brill, Leiden - Boston 2007, pp. 55-64.

²⁷ D. N. HASSE, *Avicenna's De Anima in the Latin West: The Formation of a Peripatetic Philosophy of the Soul*, The Warburg Institute, London - Turin 2000 (Warburg Institute Studies and Texts, 1).

²⁸ J. F. WIPPEL, *The Latin Avicenna as a Source for Thomas Aquinas's Metaphysics*, in Id. ed., *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas II*, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. 2007 (Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy, 47), pp. 31-64.

²⁹ Y. MICHOT, *Avicenna's Almahad in 17th Century England: Sandys, Pococke, Digby, Baron, Cudworth et alii*, in N. BAYHAN, M. MAZAK, N. ÖZKAYA eds., *Uluslararası İbn Sînâ Sempozyumu. Bildiriler 22-24 Mayıs 2008, İstanbul*, İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür A. S. Yayınları, İstanbul 2009, vol. II, pp. 287-299.

appear deceptively intelligible. His terminology became the standard in philosophical discourse in the centuries after him, and is quite familiar to all students of Arabic philosophy who are accordingly apt to assume as easily understood his formulations as they appear in Arabic. This familiarity may hide the precise understanding of its meaning for Avicenna, in the context in which it appears; only a translation into a modern language will require the student to dwell on the precise meaning of what is being said. This in turn will require minute attention to the wording of the text and bring out any ambiguities or inconsistencies in the transmitted text as printed in the available editions. A literal translation with textual annotations will highlight any ambiguities and inconsistencies and alert the reader — and the future editor — to the underlying problems. For this reason it is arguably preferable at the present stage of Avicenna research to concentrate on preparing such translations of his works as preliminary studies toward their eventual critical editions.

3. *Study aids.* Happily again, the technological revolution of the last decade has contributed much to the immense improvement in the availability of aids for the study not only of Avicenna but also of all Arabic writings. In the case of the vocabulary of Avicenna, in addition to the venerable lexica of Goichon from the 30s of the past century³⁰, which, though in need of improvement, are still indispensable, we have the recent lexica of the Beirut team of scholars³¹, and also a more modest but very useful philosophical vocabulary compiled by Janssens³². But of greater benefit to the study of Avicenna would be always to provide to the editions of any of his works a complete glossary of the words it contains, an *Index Verborum*. This is a practice that cannot be recommended highly enough, and Y. Michot deserves credit for always adhering to it in his editions of the various small treatises of our philosopher.

To indefatigable Janssens we also owe the superb annotated bibliographies of Avicenna³³, just as we are indebted to H. Daiber for his general bibliography of philosophy in the Islamic world³⁴. But beyond these printed study aids,

³⁰ A.-M. GOICHON, *Lexique de la langue philosophique d'Ibn Sīnā*, Desclée de Brouwer, Paris 1938, EAD., *Vocabulaires comparés d'Aristote et d'Ibn Sīnā*, Desclée de Brouwer, Paris 1939.

³¹ Published by the Librairie du Liban; for Avicenna see Ğ. ĞIĤAMI, *Mawsū'at muṣṭalaḥāt Ibn Sīnā (aš-Šayḥ ar-Ra'īs)*, Librairie du Liban Publishers (Maktabat Lubnān Nāširūn), Beirut 2004.

³² J. L. JANSSENS, *Avicenne*, in J.-P. ZARADER ed., *Le vocabulaire des philosophes, Suppléments I*, vol. V, Ellipses, Paris 2006, pp. 14-64.

³³ J. L. JANSSENS, *An Annotated Bibliography on Ibn Sīnā (1970-1989)*, Leuven University Press, Leuven 1991; and *First Supplement (1990-1994)*, Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'études médiévales, Louvain-la-Neuve 1999.

³⁴ H. DAIBER, *Bibliography of Islamic Philosophy, and Supplement*, Brill, Leiden-Boston-Köln 1999, 2007.

digital technology is bringing data banks of searchable Arabic texts, either on line or in CD, within easy reach of every student³⁵. These electronic aids and sites are renewed and improved upon almost daily, so that the time is approaching when the complaint of lack of study aids will belong in the past. A comprehensive and annotated lexicon and concordance of Avicenna's Arabic and Persian terminology, to surpass even the standards set by H. Bonitz's *Index Aristotelicus* (Berlin 1870 and later reprints), in whatever medium, may be a desideratum, but that would require as a basis the critical edition of his works, which is still some time in the future. For the time being, the access to his terminology afforded by the available lexica and the latest digital means is sufficient for the work ahead.

III. CRITICAL EDITIONS OF AVICENNA'S WORKS: SPECIAL PROBLEMS

In general, the preliminary activities of the identification and location of the manuscripts of a given work (and its translations into Syriac, Hebrew, or Latin, if available), and the subsequent study of the transmission and affiliation of these manuscripts and the generation of their stemmatic relationship, as briefly described above in Section I, would be sufficient preparatory work for the critical edition of that work. In the case of Avicenna, however, the composition and mutual relation of his works have certain peculiarities which present particular problems to the editor. These need to be addressed in order for the critical edition to be successful and responsive to scholarly demands.

1. *Problem of Avicenna copying himself in successive works.* It is well known that as author Avicenna frequently copied whole passages from one work into another³⁶. It appears that once he was satisfied with the formulation of a particular issue, he saw no need to recast his exposition in a different way but he simply repeated previously written passages in subsequent works. By the same token, however, he also felt free to make slight changes in vocabulary or arrangement of the material when he felt that the purposes of the work he was writing at the time required it. For the student of his philosophy, this is a very fortunate state of affairs because it enables one to identify precisely the passages where Avicenna either changed his mind or the form of his argumentation, and thus to understand better the import of the passage in question.

³⁵ As example of which I may cite the Iranian site of Hikmat Islami, information about which can be found at <http://noorsoft.info/Help.htm> (valid in February 2010), with thanks to Lukas Muehlethaler for alerting me to it.

³⁶ Already at the turn of the 13th century 'Abdallaṭīf al-Baġdādī faulted Avicenna for this shortcoming, complaining that « most of his books derive one from another and are copied from each other (*wa-akṭaru kutubihī ma'ḥūḍun ba'ḍuhā min ba'ḍin wa-mansūḥun ba'ḍuhā min ba'ḍin*) » ; in his *Kitāb an-naṣīḥatayn*, MS Bursa, Hüseyin Çelebi 823, f. 91b.

This state of affairs exists in a most pronounced way in his writings on the soul, a subject to which he reverted on numerous occasions throughout his life. We thus have the case of certain passages being copied verbatim not twice, not three times, but four times in various works. This happens with his essay on *Aḥwāl an-nafs al-insāniyya* (*The States of the Human Soul*), which I believe he wrote in what I have called his Transition Period (1013-1014), whole passages from which were next copied verbatim in the major works of his Middle Period (1023-1027), in the *Šifā'* (*The Cure*) and the *Nağāt* (*The Salvation*), and then again in the central work of his next period, *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya* or *al-Mašriqiyyūn* (*The Eastern Philosophy* or *The Easterners*). Partial correspondences between this work and those that copy it have been given in tables both by Michot and myself, but a full table has yet to be prepared³⁷.

This situation means two things. First, from a philosophical point of view, it is desirable to present to the reader the variant readings in the interconnected works for the reasons I just mentioned: to see how Avicenna revised or improved upon himself. Second, from a philological point of view, it would be inadvisable, if not impossible, to edit one such interconnected (or 'intertextual') work without consulting the others, for the very good reason that what may be corrupt readings in the transmission of one work may be corrected from those of another. Accordingly, a way has to be devised in the actual edition that will present the variant readings of the interconnected works without conflating them with the variant readings in the manuscripts of the work actually being edited. So clearly what is required is two have at least two critical apparatuses: one recording the evidence of the manuscripts containing the work itself, and another, which could be called an apparatus of parallel passages, recording those genetically related passages from, and the variant readings in, the interconnected works.

As example I will cite a telling passage from the *Šifā'*, which is repeated in *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya*, but with the text rearranged. It comes from the beginning of the *De anima* part of both of these works, where Avicenna gives the formal descriptions of the three functions of the soul, the vegetative, animal, and rational. In both works, the passage containing these descriptions, or definitions, is the same (echoing the definition given by Aristotle in his own *De anima*):

« We say that the faculties of the soul have three primary divisions: The first is the vegetative soul, which is the first perfection/entelechy of a natural body possessed of organs insofar as it reproduces, grows, and takes nourishment ; ... The second is the animal soul, which is the first perfection/entelechy of a natural

³⁷ Index of correspondences in Y. MICHOT, *Prophétie et divination selon Avicenne*, « Revue Philosophique de Louvain », 83, 1985, pp. 532-534 ; GUTAS, *Avicenna* cit., p. 100.

body possessed of organs insofar as it perceives particulars and moves by will. The third is the human soul, which is the first perfection/entelechy of a natural body possessed of organs insofar as it pertains to it to perform actions by choice based on thinking and sensible inference and insofar as it perceives universals »³⁸.

Having given these three definitions for the three primary divisions of the soul, Avicenna then continues with an objection to the way in which he has presented the material, an objection which he registers in two different ways in the two works, as follows³⁹:

aš-Šifā'

Were it not for convention, it would be best for us to make each prior [description above] an explicit condition in the description of the next,

if indeed we wish to give a description of the soul and not of the faculty of the soul which the soul has with regard to a particular function, for 'perfection/entelechy' is taken in the definition of the soul, not in the definition of a faculty of the soul.

You will find out about the difference between the animal soul and the perceptive and motor faculty, as well as between the rational soul and the faculty relating to the things that have been mentioned, such as discrimination and others. But if you want to be precise, the correct [thing to do] is *to make the vegetative [soul] a genus of the animal, and the animal [soul] a genus of the human, including the more general in the definition of the more specific*

al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya

We should have made each prior [description above] an explicit condition in the description of the next, and made the vegetative [soul] a genus of the animal, and the animal [soul] a genus of the human, including the more general in the definition of the more specific, especially if we wish to give a description of the soul and not of the faculty of the soul which the soul has with regard to a particular function.

You will find out later about the difference between the animal soul and the perceptive and motor faculty, as well as between the rational soul and the faculty relating to the things that have been mentioned, such as discrimination and others.

³⁸ *Aš-Šifā'*, *An-nafs*, ed. F. RAHMAN, *Avicenna's De Anima*, London 1959, pp. 39-40.

³⁹ The texts are taken from *Aš-Šifā'*, *An-nafs*, ed. F. RAHMAN, p. 40, and from *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya*, MS Istanbul III. Ahmet 2125, f. 662a. See also the discussion of the same passages in GUTAS, *Avicenna's Eastern («Oriental») Philosophy* cit., pp. 175-176.

The text printed above in italics indicates what Avicenna has rearranged to fit his new argument, while a corresponding blank space in the facing column indicates that the text has been omitted in the new rearrangement.

Avicenna here clearly refers to the passage in Aristotle's *De anima*, Book Two, chapters one and two, where Aristotle gives a general definition of the soul and then goes on briefly to describe the vegetative soul (growth and decay, 413a25-413b1), the animal soul (sensation, 413b2-11), and the human soul (imagination and thinking, 413b24-32), summing up the discussion as follows (413b11-16):

« But for the moment let so much be said only, that the soul is the first principle of the [characteristics above] mentioned, and is defined by them, [that is,] by the faculties of nutrition, sensation, thought, and by movement. Whether each of these is soul or part of a soul, and if part, whether it is such as to be separable in theory [*logos*] only or also in place — some of these [things] it is not difficult to perceive, but others involve *aporiae* ».

Avicenna makes explicit what is implied by Aristotle here, and gives three separate definitions, but objects to this and adds that these definitions should be interrelated as genus and species, though in his case, he says, he has followed tradition, i.e., the Aristotelian text, and made his presentation as he just did. In the *Šifā'*, in accordance with the purpose of that work, which is to be in dialogue with the Aristotelian tradition, he mentions that he is following the tradition, though he is registering his objection to it. The recasting of this paragraph in the *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya*, which aims to present philosophy systematically and not historically, makes no mention of any 'convention' or following tradition but simply presents the argument in its natural progression. Because in the new rearrangement in the *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya* the first part of the sentence is connected with the second through the inferential 'especially', the explanatory sentence in the *Šifā'*, « for 'entelechy' is taken in the definition of the soul, not in the definition of a faculty of the soul », which provides guidance for the correct understanding of the paragraph, is omitted.

The rearrangement itself of this paragraph is therefore important textual evidence and has to be reported in both an edition of the *Šifā'* and in an edition of *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya*. The same applies to all other changes — whether minor or major — in the multiple rewritings of the works of Avicenna. This evidence, then, must be recorded in a second apparatus, an apparatus of parallel passages, in order not to confuse the readings of the manuscripts proper of a work with the readings in the other works. In this way a synoptic view can be gained of Avicenna's progression in his thinking through the many parallel works. For an example of the actual presentation of the text in

printed form see the sample edition of another passage from *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya* given in the Appendix.

2. PROBLEM WITH DIFFERENT RECENSIONS AND FRAGMENTATION OF HIS WORKS

2a. Different recensions of one work. Some works by Avicenna, especially the shorter ones, have been transmitted both in different recensions and with varying components and constituent parts. The most striking example is provided by an essay that bears a variety of titles, all derived from the opening words of the treatise, and all having somehow a reference to the *Fī l-ağrām al-‘ulwiyya* (*On the Supernal Bodies*)⁴⁰. It is a brief treatise on the heavenly bodies, their nature, their generation, and their influence on the world, running parallel for the most part to the first few physical treatises of Aristotle. Over thirty manuscripts of the work are recorded by the bibliographers. The standard recension appears to be the one that is most frequently attested in the manuscripts, though very few appear to have been examined. A second recension appeared in printed form in a book containing a number of philosophical treatises, called *Mağmū‘at ar-rasā‘il* (*Collection of Treatises*), and published in 1328/1910 in Cairo. As far as I can tell, it is not known from what manuscripts any of the printed versions has been taken. As an example of the way in which the two recensions are related, I will present in parallel columns the opening paragraphs.

Fī l-ağrām al-‘ulwiyya

MS Istanbul, Üniversite 4755 = *Tis‘
Rasā‘il* 39-40

Mağmū‘at ar-rasā‘il, Cairo 1328/1910,
258-259

Ibn Sīnā said : This is a treatise which I composed to present the verified opinion with which the deliberations of the ancients concluded on [the subject of] the substance of the heavenly bodies, and to express their doctrine which I have ascertained to the extent that I am aware of their writings [*ma‘āhiq*].

Ibn Sīnā said : This is a treatise in which I explain the true opinion of the ancients on [the subject of] the real natures of the heavenly bodies,

in accordance with what I derived from their works that have reached us in Arabic translation.

⁴⁰ MAHDAVĪ, *Fehrest* cit, no. 53, ANAWATĪ, *Essai* cit., no. 53.

Section. [The ancients] say that natural bodies are confined to two divisions, compound and simple. By compound, they mean every body whose existence and species is due to the combination in it of bodies having different natural qualities and species, as with animals and plants. By simple, they mean those whose existence is not like this so that it is reduced neither in the estimation nor reason into bodies except those that are of similar natures and species — for example, water and pure earth.

Section. [The ancients] say: Bodies are divided into compound and simple. The first is that whose quiddity [*māhiya*] and nature [*kiyān*] are generated from bodies having different natural qualities, like animals and plants. The second is what is not like this and cannot be reduced either in the estimation or reason except into bodies that are of similar forms of species, like water and unadulterated earth.

From this comparison it is clear that the recension in the Üniversite manuscript is more elaborate in its expression, a situation that is observable throughout the treatise. The question is, whether the one is by Avicenna and the other not, or both are by him, as two versions of a treatise which he revised later in life. It is interesting to note that the more concise recension, that in *Mağmū'at ar-rasā'il*, appears more straightforward in its expression: the author says that he will talk about the theories of the ancients about the heavenly bodies to the extent that he knows about them from the books translated into Arabic (*min kalāmihim al-mu'arrab al-wāṣil ilaynā*). I like to think that the innocence of expression is indicative of the very young Avicenna, right after his studies in the Samanid library in Buḥārā. Also, the author uses at the beginning of the treatise terminology which appears to be that of the translation literature, like the use of the word *kiyān* to express nature, essence, something which was later replaced by the word *ṭabī'a*. I thus tend to think, prima facie, that both recensions are by Avicenna, one very early and the other slightly later. However, that is a preliminary assessment and it will have to be tested by minute comparison with the physical treatises of Avicenna in the *Šifā'* and elsewhere. But assuming that they both are by Avicenna, the question is raised how they are to be edited. Given the high verbal discrepancy between the two recensions, they will have to be edited separately, but clearly in the same publication, or in parallel columns, as above, so that the reader can compare the two.

2b. Fragmentation of works and independent circulation of their parts. In addition to the problem of varying recensions of the same work by Avicenna,

there is the problem that some of his works were either (a) fragmented in the course of their transmission and parts of them began circulating as independent treatises, or (b) plagiarized and copied into the works of later authors. There is also the possibility, in the case of the first alternative, that the works in question did not start as wholes and were then fragmented, but that to the contrary, they were originally smaller pieces that were subsequently put together as a single longer treatise either by Avicenna himself or by subsequent followers. This has to be studied and verified in each case during the study of the manuscript transmission of the treatise in question.

An example of both of these circumstances is again provided by the essay I mentioned above, *Aḥwāl an-nafs al-insāniyya* (*The States of the Human Soul*). This apparently very popular treatise, in addition to being copied repeatedly by Avicenna himself in his later works, as discussed above, was also fragmented and plagiarized. Its first chapter, on the definition of the soul, circulated independently under the title, *Risālat an-nufūs* (*Treatise on Souls*)⁴¹, while the thirteenth chapter, on prophecy, circulated independently under the title, *an-Nafs al-falakiyya* (*The Soul of the Sphere*)⁴². Other than this, numerous passages from the same treatise appear in what is apparently al-Ġazālī's work, *Ma'āriḡ al-quḍs* (*Steps to Sanctity*)⁴³.

In view of this situation, the edition of such a work like *The States of the Human Soul* will be a complicated affair. Naturally all the manuscripts of the work itself will have to be consulted, but then so will have to be also the manuscripts containing parts of it in independent circulation, as well as the manuscripts of later works copying it, like al-Ġazālī's *Ma'āriḡ al-quḍs*. The reason is that we do not know how early the chapters started circulating independently: if this happened soon after Avicenna's death, this means that whoever was responsible for it may have had access to manuscripts of the *Aḥwāl* that were very close to Avicenna's own copy. The same applies to the passages of the work cited by al-Ġazālī in the *Ma'āriḡ al-quḍs*: al-Ġazālī may have had access to very reliable and old manuscripts. That this indeed is the case was proven by Michot, who in 1985 prepared a translation of chapter 13 of the *Aḥwāl an-nafs al-insāniyya* which circulated independently as *an-Nafs*

⁴¹ ANAWATI, *Essai* cit., no. 109 ; MAHDAVĪ, *Fehrest* cit., no. 240 ; ERGIN, *Bibliyografya* cit., no. 211.

⁴² ANAWATI, *Essai* cit., no. 74 ; MAHDAVĪ, *Fehrest* cit., no. 239 ; ERGIN, *Bibliyografya* cit., no. 214.

⁴³ See Y. MICHOT, *La destinée de l'homme selon Avicenne. Le retour à Dieu (ma'ād) et l'imagination*, Peeters, Leuven 1986, pp. xvii-xviii, and Id., *Prophétie et divination* cit., pp. 511-512. For the many quotations in this work of passages from Avicenna — and not only from the *States of the Human Soul* — see J. JANSSENS, *Le Ma'ārij al-quḍs fī madārij ma'rifat al-nafs : Un élément-clé pour le dossier Ghazzālī-Ibn Sīnā ?*, « *AHDLMA* », 60, 1993, pp. 27-55 ; repr. in his *Ibn Sīnā and His Influence* cit., no. VIII.

al-falakiyya. Michot very prudently did use al-Ġazālī's *Ma'āriḡ al-quḏs* for his translation, and he was able to ascertain that for certain passages the correct reading was to be found only in al-Ġazālī's work and not in the manuscript of the *Aḥwāl* that he was using. This means that a future critical edition of this and related works will have to use all such evidence, and record the variant readings in separate critical apparatuses — at least two, and possibly three — in order not to conflate the stages of evidence and give the reader as accurate a picture of the transmission of the text as possible.

The next example is provided by the work known much more as al-Fārābī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (*Core Texts of Philosophy*) than as Avicenna's. It is, however, by Avicenna, as the contents are clearly Avicennan, and in some manuscripts it is indeed attributed to him under the title, *al-Firdaws fī māhiyyat al-insān* (*The Paradise Treatise on the Quiddity of Man*). Of importance for our discussion at this point is that this work too was at some point fragmented, and one part of it circulated independently under the title, *al-Quwā l-insāniyya wa-idrākātuhā* (*On the Human Faculties and their Perceptions*)⁴⁴.

3. *Special apparatus for parallels from al-Mubāḥaṭāt and at-Ta'liqāt*. Having mentioned the need for an apparatus of parallel passages in the editions of most of Avicenna's works — especially the major ones — I would like to add a further suggestion about an additional apparatus of parallel passages that appears to be necessitated by the nature of two of Avicenna's works, *al-Mubāḥaṭāt* (*Discussions*) and *at-Ta'liqāt* (*Notes*). These two works can be very roughly described as a collection of disparate passages that discuss in extenso specific problems in the philosophy of Avicenna, problems that were either raised by his disciples and colleagues, or treated by him as additional notes to complement his standard treatment of the subject in his major works⁴⁵.

These two works thus bear an essential relationship to many of Avicenna's major works, and are in reality nothing else but footnotes, appendices, or additional comments on positions he had already taken. Unfortunately their contents have neither been inventoried and attached to the respective passages in the major works where the same subjects are discussed, nor have they been studied in any systematic fashion. In addition, because they are in the form

⁴⁴ See MAHDAVĪ, *Fehrest* cit., no. 192, and S. PINES, *Ibn Sīnā et l'auter de la Risālat al-fuṣūṣ fī l-ḥikma : Quelques données du problème*, « *Revue des Études Islamiques* », 19, 1951, pp. 121-124 ; repr. in S. PINES, *Studies in the History of Arabic Philosophy*, ed. S. STROUMSA, Magnes Press, Jerusalem 1996, pp. 297-300.

⁴⁵ To these one should also add the numerous incidental discussions of philosophical issues in Avicenna's letters and private writings ; see my comments in the review of MICHOT, *Lettre au vizir Abū Sa'd* cit., in « *Journal of Islamic Studies* », 14, 2003, pp. 379-381.

of disparate and discrete notes, they do not normally attract the attention of scholars. But since they are, as I said, footnotes to the main texts in the major works, they cannot be separated from them, and I am of the opinion that this fact should be reflected in an edition of the major works that discuss the subjects treated in them. I would thus suggest an additional upper apparatus in the edition of such major texts that would refer the reader to, or cite the passages in the *Discussions* and *Notes* where Avicenna discusses these issues further. For an example see the sample text edited in the Appendix.

APPENDIX

Sample edition of a text by Avicenna

As discussed in the body of this article, many works by Avicenna — and certainly the major and most important among them — are re-elaborations, re-statements, and transcriptions of others. In addition, because Avicenna revisited a number of issues repeatedly, his writings are frequently self-referential and even self-corrective of earlier formulations. This state of affairs makes the critical edition of his works complicated, for it requires consulting, apart from the manuscripts which contain the text being edited, all other works by him which are textually related to the text edited, and referring to those in which the same problem or question is treated in parallel ways. All this information collected from these various sources needs to be recorded on the same page as the text being edited. The following sample edition aims to provide a blueprint for this procedure that is recommended to all future editors of Avicenna's works.

The text being edited here is taken from *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya*, toward the end of the section on the soul at the end of the entire part on Physics (*aṭ-ṭabī'īyyāt*)⁴⁶. The edition is based on four manuscripts of the work, referred to with the following sigla, as follows:

- A Istanbul, III. Ahmet 2125, ff. 691b-692a ;
- L Leipzig, 796 Vollers, ff. 88b-89a ;
- N Istanbul Nuruosmaniye 4894, f. 422b ;
- S Istanbul, Ayasofya 2403 ; f. 123a.
- Ω agreement of all four MSS
- < > conjectural additions to the text
- w.p. without points : unpointed *rasm* in the manuscript

Avicenna's other works from which parallel material is cited are the following:

- ḥ *Aḥwāl an-nafs*, ed. A. F. AL-AHWĀNĪ, Cairo 1371/1952, pp. 122-123 ;
- m *Al-Mubāḥaṭāt*, ed. M. BĪDĀRFAR, Bīdār, Qum 1413, pp. 106-107 ;
- n *An-Nağāt*, Maṭba'at as-Sa'āda, Cairo 1331, pp. 272-274 ;
- š *Aš-Šifā'*, *An-nafs*, ed. F. RAḤMAN, *Avicenna's De Anima*, London 1959, pp. 249-250 ;
- ω agreement of texts ḥ, n, š

⁴⁶ In the table of contents of the part on Physics which I presented in my article, *Avicenna's Eastern («Oriental») Philosophy* cit., p. 180, it occurs at the end of the third from the last entry on *af'āl al-'aql*. For the correspondences in other works by Avicenna see further below.

من الحكمة المشرقية

وَمَا يَحَقِّقُ هَذَا مَا يُعَلِّمُ مِنْ أَنَّ الْأُمُورَ الْمَعْقُولَةَ الَّتِي يُتَوَصَّلُ إِلَى اِكْتِسَابِهَا إِنَّمَا تَكْتَسِبُ بِحُصُولِ الْحَدِّ الْأَوْسَطِ فِي الْقِيَاسِ وَهَذَا الْحَدُّ الْأَوْسَطُ قَدْ يَحْصُلُ تَارَةً بِالْحَدْسِ وَهُوَ فِعْلُ الذَّهْنِ يَسْتَنْبِطُ بِذَاتِهِ الْحَدُّ الْأَوْسَطَ وَتَارَةً بِالتَّعْلِيمِ وَمِبَادِيِ التَّعْلِيمِ أَيْضاً الْحَدْسُ الَّذِي أُسْتَنْبِطُ بِهِ الْعِلْمُ ثُمَّ أَدَّى إِلَى الْمُتَعَلِّمِ وَهَذَا تَمَّا يَتَفَاوَتُ بِالْكَفِّ وَالْكَيفِ وَيَنْتَهِي إِلَى مَنْ لَا حَدْسَ لَهُ مِنْ طَرَفِ النِّقْصَانِ وَمِنْ طَرَفِ الزِّيَادَةِ إِلَى مَنْ

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m 1-4 : (٢٣٤) س ط - لا بدّ للقوة العقلية من استعمال الفكرة عند التعلّم والتذكّر بل عند ما يعقل أنّها قد عقلت فكيف يكون لها إدراك بعد الممارسة وبتلّان هذه القوة (٢٣٥) ج ط - أَلْفُ بُدٌّ مِنْ اسْتِعْمَالِ الْقُوَّةِ الْمَفَكَّرَةِ الطَّالِبَةِ لِلْحَدِّ الْأَوْسَطِ وَذَلِكَ لِأَنَّ التَّعَلُّمَ هُوَ عَلَى نَحْوِ (٢٣٦) أَحَدَهُمَا عَلَى سَبِيلِ الْحَدْسِ وَهُوَ أَنْ يَنْظُرَ الْحَدُّ الْأَوْسَطُ بِالْبَالِ مِنْ غَيْرِ طَلَبِ فَيَنَالُ وَالنَّيْجَةَ مَعاً وَالثَّانِي يَكُونُ بِجِلَّةٍ وَطَلَبِ (٢٣٧) وَالْحَدْسُ هُوَ فَيْضٌ إِلَهِيٌّ وَاقْتِصَالٌ عَقْلِيٌّ يَكُونُ بِلا كَسْبِ الْبَيِّنَةِ

بعد الجهل بها إما توصل إلى ξ, n ، إما تكسب ω || 2 أن من المعلوم الظاهر [ما يعلم من ξ, n, h : ξ, n : والحس] وهو ω || 3 يحصل ضربين من الحصول فتارة يحصل [بحصل تارة] h اكتسابها وتارة ω | الأوساط والذكاء قوة الحدس | ω به بذاته | ξ, n | للذهن : h | الذهن | h | والحس هو الحدس فإن الأشياء تنتهي لا عمالة إلى حدوس [الحدس الذي ... وهذا] ω | أيضاً ω || 4 يحصل استنبطها أرباب تلك الحدوس ثم أكوها إلى المتعلمين فجاء إذا أن يقع للإنسان بنفسه الحدس وأن يعتقد في ذهنه والكيف أمّا في الكمّ فالأنّ بعض الناس يكون أكثر عدد [والكيف وينتهي 5] ω | القياس بلا معلّم وهذا حدس للحدود الوسطى وأمّا في الكيف فالأنّ بعض الناس أسرع زمان حدس ولأنّ هذا التفات ليس منحصرأ [وينتهي إلى من لا حدس له من طرف النقصان ومن ω | حد بل يقل الزيادة و النقصان دائماً وينتهي ω وينتهي في طرف النقصان إلى من لا حدس له البيّة فيجب أن ينتهي أيضاً في

NS تكسب || 2 NS الاشياء بها AL اكتسابها | om. NS من | NS, w.p. L تعلمه : A يعلم 1
 4 NS وينتدى : AL ومبادئ | NS للتعليم : AL بالتعليم repeated S وهو 3 || AL بكتسب
 AL المتعلم | perhaps from the teacher to be read : Ω العلم | L الحدس : NS للحدس : A الحدس
 NS وطرف : AL ومن طرف | NS طرف : AL اطرف | NS لا حد : AL لا حدس || 5 NS التعلم

له حدس في كلّ المطلوبات أو أكثرها وإلى من له حدس في أسرع وقت وأقصره فيمكن إذاً أن يكون شخص من الناس مؤيد النفس بشدة الصفاء وشدة الاتصال بالمبادئ العقلية إلى أن يشتعل حدساً - أعني قبولاً من العقل الفعّال في كلّ شيء - وترتسم فيه الصور التي في العقل الفعّال إمّا دفعةً وإمّا قريباً من دفعة ارتساماً لا تقليدياً بل بترتيب يشتمل على الحدود الوسطى فإنّ التقليديّات في الأمور التي تُعرف بأسبابها ليست يقينية عقلية وهذا ضرب من النبوة بل أعلى قُوَى النبوة والأولى أن تسمّى هذه القوة قُدسيةً وهي أعلى مراتب <القوى> الإنسانية

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7-12 m : (٢٣٧) وقد يبلغ من الناس بعضهم مبلغاً يكاد يستغنى عن الفكر في أكثر ما يتعلّم ويكون له قوّة النفس القدسيّة وإذا تشرفت النفس واكتسبت القوّة الفاضلة وفارقت البدن كان نيلها ما ينال هناك عند زوال الشواغل أسرع من نيل الحدس فتتمثل لها العالم العقلي على ترتيب حدود القضايا والمعقولات الذاتيّة - دون الزمانيّ - ويكون ذلك دفعةً (٢٣٨) وإنما الحاجة إلى الفكر لكثير النفس أو لقلّة تمرّتها وعصرها عن نيل الفيض الإلهيّ أو للشواغل ولو لا ذلك لاشتعلت [read thus] النفس جلاءً من كلّ شيء إلى أمد الحقّ

add. n الفعّال من كلّ شيء 9 || n, h قبولاً لاهم : § قبولاً لها من 8 || § لشدة : n, h بشدة 7 || n, § مراتب القوى 12 || om, h وهذا ضرب ... الإنسانية 11-12 || o اما تعرف 11

|| N مرید ALS مؤيد 7 || NS واحصره AL واقصره NS الحدس : L حرس A احسن 6 || L ترتسم A فترتسم NS وترتسم 9 || S يستفيد : N يستفيد A يشتغل L يشتعل 8 || القوى 12 || om, NS AL بل 11 || LNS مشتمل A يشتمل L ترتيب ANS ترتيب 10 add. Gutas from §

The usefulness of such presentation of the text is manifest. Even from such a small sample important conclusions can be drawn about the transmission, formation, and substance of the text edited from *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya*. In the first place, it is clear from the critical (bottom) apparatus that of the four manuscripts of the work, A and N on the one hand and L and S on the other form two separate sub-branches in the transmission because of the common errors they share. However, the omission of the word *al-quwá* in the last line of the cited text, which has to be supplied from the *Šifā'* (the transmitted reading, *marātib al-insāniyya*, is wrong), indicates that ultimately all four go to a common archetype which included that error. This information is useful for the establishment of the stemmatic affiliation of the manuscripts, which will then enable the accurate selection of variants in the process of editing. At the same time it indicates that it would be desirable to identify other manuscripts of the work (one, for example, in which the word *al-quwá* would be present in that passage) with the hope that one could then reach a stage in the transmission that would be anterior to the archetype of these four manuscripts and thus closer to Avicenna's autograph and more free of errors.

Secondly, the upper apparatus with parallel readings from three other works by Avicenna is useful not only for the establishment of the text of *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya*, since it provides the word *al-quwá* in the last line, as just mentioned, but it also offers valuable information at a glance about the method of abridgment Avicenna followed while compiling this work from the others. In this sample it consists mostly of omission of phrases and clauses with the attendant loss of nuances (and perhaps a simplification of the philosophical sense?). In one instance it even brings to prominence an important problem that bears directly upon Avicenna's theory of *ḥads* (or 'intuition' in the special sense he used it, i.e., hitting upon the middle term in a syllogism). In line 4 all four manuscripts of *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya* read, *al-ḥadsu llaḏī stunbiṭa bihi l-'ilmu tumma uddiya ilá l-muta'allimi*, whereas the corresponding passage in the *Šifā'* has, *al-ašyā' tantahī ilá ḥudūsini stanbaṭahā arbābu tilka l-ḥudūsi tumma addawhā ilá l-muta'allimīna*. This may lead one to think that it is necessary to emend *al-'ilm* to *al-mu'allim* (i.e., using the word *al-mu'allim* to stand for *arbāb al-ḥudūs* in the *Šifā'*), which would be both another instance of a common error shared by all four MSS, and palaeographically simple enough to explain: such omissions of the letter *mīm* in *lām-mīm* ligatures are common in Arabic manuscripts. However, the text as transmitted in the four manuscripts is by itself and without any correction intelligible, but it means a slightly different thing than the corresponding text in the *Šifā'*. It states that what is discovered is not so much 'intuitions' as such, as implied in the *Šifā'* (*ḥudūsuni stanbaṭahā arbābu l-ḥudūsi*), but knowledge that is discovered *by means* of these intuitions (*al-ḥadsu llaḏī stunbiṭa bihi l-'ilmu*). If this reading is accepted, then one may see a certain development in Avicenna's argumentation about *ḥads*, one that makes the argument more precise, but also more impersonal: it is not those who have intuitions (*arbābu l-ḥudūsi*) that discover the middle terms and transmit them to

students, but middle terms — or knowledge, in this case — are just discovered by means of intuition. But yet another consideration, though, would be that it was precisely because the sentence with *al-‘ilm* instead of *al-mu‘allim* makes good sense that the mistake was not noticed, and thus one should select *mu‘allim* for the text. The question now which of the two alternatives is the correct reading, i.e., what Avicenna wrote, will be up to the future editor of the text to determine.

Finally the upper upper apparatus, which cites passages from the *Mubāḥaṭāt* that discuss the same issues as those in *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqiyya*, presents some of the elaborations which Avicenna effected on his theory of intuition, as I discussed elsewhere⁴⁷.

⁴⁷ D. GUTAS, *Intuition and Thinking: The Evolving Structure of Avicenna's Epistemology*, « Princeton Papers. Interdisciplinary Journal of Middle Eastern Studies », 9, 2001, pp. 1-38 ; repr. *Aspects of Avicenna*, ed. R. WISNOWSKY, Markus Wiener, Princeton 2001, pp. 1-38.

ABSTRACT

The article presents a survey of the state of current research on Avicenna and discusses the areas which are in need of attention, as listed in the table of contents given at the beginning. In the most crucial area of research, the critical edition of Avicenna's works, suggestions are offered for resolving the peculiar problems that face the editor, along with a sample page of an edited text in the Appendix.

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