operation, and he draws upon the Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ and Avicenna whilst advocating a Ṣūfī hermeneutics.

There is a neat parallelism in the structure of parts one and two. Each begins with a chapter on al-Ghazālī on theology, progresses with a chapter on philosophy and finally ends with a chapter on al-Ghazālī and Ṣūfī hermeneutics. The economy and precision of the organisation of the book is certainly to be commended. The rather short conclusion summarises the chapters and draws together two key points. First, the relationship between theory and practice in hermeneutics is often tenuous. Second, al-Ghazālī does not have a singular hermeneutics. Whittingham acknowledges the al-Ghazālī debate by stating that the study of hermeneutics does not decide his relationship to the Ashʿarī school. However, one can discern elements of a unified hermeneutical theory as discussed in the books: first, interpretation has its limits and one has to possess the requisite training and ability to interpret texts; second, there is complementarity between reason and revelation and the Qurʾan and philosophy work together in the exposition of truth; and finally, the goal of the seeker is certainty and the acquisition of knowledge that yields it. Of course, whether these points place al-Ghazālī outside the Ashʿarī school or not is debatable. What they do indicate is the process of the 'philosophisation' of theology in medieval Islam. There is much to commend in Whittingham's brief study but one would want to see more, a greater contextualisation of the intellectual tools and learned culture as well as a discussion of hermeneutics as it developed in theory and practice in medieval Islam. In a monograph, one would also wish to see a bolder path struck, a critical evaluation of the literature but also more of the author and where he places himself within the al-Ghazālī debate, or even beyond it. Throwing aside the caution of the dissertation's format would make for a more interesting read. What the book does demonstrate is that there is still much work to be done on al-Ghazālī.

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SAJJAD H. RIZVI

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Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism in Medieval Islam. Texts and Studies on the Development and History of Kalam, Vol. I. By Richard M. Frank. Edited by Dimitri Gutas.[1] Aldershot: Ashgate, Variorum, 2005. Pp. x + 392. £62.50. **Early Islamic Theology: The Muʿtazilites and al-Ashʿarī. Texts and Studies on the Development and History of Kalam, Vol. II.** By Richard M. Frank. Edited by Dimitri Gutas.[2] Aldershot: Ashgate, Variorum, 2007. Pp. xii + 384. £62.50.

The academic work of Richard M. Frank has long been recognised for its outstanding contribution to modern scholarship's appreciation of the philosophical theology

associated with the early and classical intellectual tradition of Islam. Frank is considered to be one of the foremost Western authorities in the field of classical Islamic theology and exemplifying this accolade is the fact that the Variorum Collected Studies Series has dedicated three volumes to his published articles.[3] The first of these volumes is devoted to articles which examine not only issues germane to 'both the lexical and intellectual context of *kalām*' but also aspects of theology's nexus with philosophy and mysticism. It comprises fourteen articles in addition to an introductory piece entitled 'Yā kalām' (listed as 'Article I') in which Frank offers a very modest account of his career-long devotion to the study of Islamic philosophical theology.[4] This brief introductory piece is followed by a selection of articles which focus on Frank's initial interest in the philological etymology of Islamic philosophy and the text and terminology of Graeco-Arabic translations. Included among these articles are 'Some fragments of Isḥāq's translation of the *de Anima*' (1958–9, 'Article II'); 'Some textual notes on the Oriental versions of Themistius' paraphrase of Book Λ of the Metaphysics' (1958–9, 'Article III'); 'The origin of the Arabic philosophical term ʾannīya' (or *inniyya*) (1956, 'Article IV'); and, a later paper which examines 'The use of the *Enneads* by John of Scythopolis' (1987, 'Article V'). Interestingly, this volume features two other articles which examine the issue of terminology, although this is broached within the context of the Arabic and *kalām* traditions: 'Meanings are spoken of in many ways: the earlier Arab grammarians' (1981, 'Article XII'); and '"*Lam yazal*" as a formal term in Muslim theological discourse' (1995, 'Article XIII'). The early development of Islamic theology and its applied modes of thought are reviewed in a number of pieces, including 'The neoplatonism of Jahm Ibn Ṣafwān' (1965, 'Article IX'), which was one of the first papers by Frank on the subject of *kalām*; 'Remarks on the early development of the kalām' (1967, 'Article VI'); and 'Reason and revealed law: a sample of parallels and divergences in kalām and falsafa' (1978, 'Article VII').[5] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 555/1111) is the primary subject of a number of articles: these include 'Al-Ghazālī on *taqlīd*. Scholars, theologians, and philosophers' (1991–2, 'Article X') and 'Al-Ghazālī's use of Avicenna's philosophy' (1987–9, 'Article XI'). Aspects of the Ghazālian cosmology are also reviewed in 'Currents and countercurrents [in the Muʿtazila, Ashʿarīs and al-Ghazālī]' (1997, 'Article VIII'). Intriguingly, the fact that studies on al-Ghazālī feature in this particular volume seemingly intimates the significance that Frank attaches to this scholar's 'brand of neo-platonising theology'. Two short editions and translations of Ashʿarī theological tracts by the mystic Abū'l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1074) entitled *Lumaʿ fī'l-iʿtiqād* (1982, 'Article XIV') and *al-Fuṣūl fī'l-uṣūl* (1983, 'Article XV') form the last two contributions.

The second volume of collected articles examines early Islamic theology, the Muʿtazilīs, and al-Ashʿarī, featuring nine individual pieces of research: five of which review early *kalām* and key conceptual constructs defined by leading Basran

Muʿtazilīs. These include: 'The metaphysics of created being according to Abū l-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf: a philosophical study of the earliest kalām' (1966, 'Article I'), which was originally published as a short monograph; 'The divine attributes according to the teaching of Abū l-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf' (1969, 'Article II'); 'Several fundamental assumptions of the Basra School of the Muʿtazila' (1971, 'Article III'); 'Al-maʿdūm wal-mawjūd: the non-existent, the existent, and the possible in the teaching of Abū Hāshim and his followers' (1980, 'Article IV'); and 'Abū Hāshim's theory of 'states': its structure and function' (1971, 'Article V').[6] The remaining four articles constitute seminal pieces on the theological thought associated with the eponym of Ashʿarism, Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 324/935). They include 'Elements in the development of the teaching of al-Ashʿarī' (1991, 'Article VI'); 'The structure of created causality according to al-Ashʿarī: an analysis of the Kitāb al-Lumaʿ' (1966, 'Article VII'); 'Al-Ashʿarī's conception of the nature and role of speculative reasoning in theology' (1972, 'Article VIII'); and, finally, 'Al-Ashʿarī's *Kitāb al-Ḥathth ʿalā'l-Baḥth*' (1988, 'Article IX'), which was previously published in Richard McCarthy's *The Theology of al-Ashʿarī*, under the 'spurious' title *Risālat istiḥān al-khawḍ fī ʿilm al-kalām*. Frank's edition is derived from the work of Abū'l-Qāsim al-Anṣārī (d. 512/1118) entitled *al-Ghunya fī'l-kalām* in which the original text of al-Ashʿarī is preserved.[7]

It is in the introductory article comprised in the first volume of this series that Frank reminisces over how he came to devote himself to the study of *kalām* and how his comprehension of the discipline matured over the years. The account is a humble yet revealing survey of a life-long quest to draw attention to the rich stock of material offered by the discipline of Islamic theology together with the discourse, ideas and influences which lay at the heart of its theoretical compass. As an undergraduate Frank studied some philosophy (Plato and Aristotle), reading al-Fārābī's *Compendium of Plato's Laws* with the distinguished Italian scholar Francesco Gabrieli. The earliest studies he produced on Islamic philosophy were essentially philological endeavours which weighed up the etymology of terminology and the lexicon of Muslim philosophical texts. Such early investigations led Frank to conclude that there existed evidence of the influence of Syriac on some early Arabic philosophical works. The standard Ashʿarī theological texts associated with the formative period of Islamic theology subsequently attracted his attention: these included al-Shahrastānī's *Kitāb al-milal wa'l-niḥal*, which he originally read as a student with Giorgio Levi della Vida; and the seminal works associated with the Ashʿarī school, including al-Ashʿarī's *Maqālāt* and his *Lumaʿ*; al-Baghdādī's *al-Farq bayna'l-firaq* and his *Uṣūl al-dīn*; and al-Bāqillānī's *Tamhīd al-awāʾil*. He notes that prevalent among his Orientalist colleagues, and indeed scholars of *falsafa*, had been the view that the discipline of *kalām* was a somewhat unsophisticated vehicle for the defence of religious dogma; yet, Frank's acquaintance with the theological materials preserved in such treatises confirmed to him that *kalām* was 'a rich and largely uncultivated field'

and that it warranted critical academic attention; much of his career has been devoted to pursuing this end.

Frank's introduction also makes mention of the fact that reading a lot of literary Arabic prose and poetry enabled him to nurture a profounder 'knowledge and experience of the classical language'. It was his view that such knowledge was crucial for anyone wishing to delve into the fields of *kalām* and *falsafa*; he emphasises that the literature of the early Arabic grammarians was likewise critical in this respect as both *kalām* and *naḥw* had developed in the same intellectual environment. Classical Arabic lexicons such as al-Zabīdī's (d. 1206/1791) *Tāj al-ʿarūs* were also viewed as being indispensable tools for the student of *kalām*. While Frank devoted a number of articles to the theological thought of the Muʿtazila (and indeed a monograph), it was Ashʿarism and its distinctive brand of theology which featured prominently in much of his later academic work. Although scholars such as George Makdisi had taken the view that the association between religious orthodoxy and Ashʿarism was not axiomatic, Frank believed it to be critical to the formation of Sunnī theology and consistently endeavoured to identify the school's eponym, al-Ashʿarī, with the scholastic *kalām* championed within later forms of Ashʿarism.

It was through studying the seminal Ashʿarī texts, many of which Frank had read in manuscript form while in Egypt and Turkey, that he took an avid interest in the works of al-Ghazālī (d. 555/1111). He was struck by his direct use of Avicenna's ideas and the fact that much of this philosopher's cosmology was of major significance to al-Ghazālī's synthesis of theological thought. Many of his arguments regarding al-Ghazālī were fleshed out in his monograph entitled *Al-Ghazālī and the Ashʿarī School*, particularly the view that al-Ghazālī's commitment to Ashʿarī theology was 'tenuous in the extreme' and that he espoused a cautiously constructed Neoplatonic theology which he considered to be superior to that of his Ashʿarī cohorts; this became evident to Frank from his study of al-Ghazālī's position on the concept of *taqlīd*.[8] It is true that a number of his arguments concerning al-Ghazālī have been challenged, but Frank's contribution to modern scholarship's understanding of classical Ashʿarism and the position of al-Ghazālī in respect of this school remains critical.[9] The subsequent pieces of research produced by Frank set about making available the large quantity of data he had accumulated over the years on the subject of the basic metaphysical teaching of Ashʿarī *kalām* and the technical terminologies refined among the school's luminaries. Such studies confirmed to him the 'high intellectual acuity of the major Ashʿarī masters'. (Most of the articles relating to later Ashʿarī thought are featured in Volume 3, *Classical Islamic Theology: The Ashʿarites*, published in 2008.) It should be said that the gamut of research produced by Frank over the years reveals not only the extent of his sophisticated contribution to the academic study of classical Islamic theology, but also justifies his devoting his career to a discipline that many of his peers originally considered to be 'unworthy of

serious study'. Along with the accomplishments of many other notable scholars working in the field of Islamic theology, including individuals such as Joseph van Ess and Wilferd Madelung, it will be some time before such Western academic endeavours are matched or even surpassed. In the words of Dimitri Gutas, who wrote the foreword for each individual volume, 'the collected articles in this and the following volumes form an indispensable introduction and methodological orientation to the serious study of *kalām*' (p. ix). Few would contest this view.

MUSTAFA SHAH

NOTES

1 The detailed index for Volume I was prepared by Racha Omari.

2 The detailed index for Volume II was prepared by Alexander Treiger.

3 These include monographs such as: *Beings and Their Attributes: the Teaching of the Basrian School of the Muʿtazila in the Classical Period* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978); *Creation and the Cosmic System: al-Ghazālī and Avicenna* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, Universitätsverlag, 1992); *Al-Ghazālī and the Ashʿarite School* (London: Duke University Press, 1994). Richard Frank is Professor Emeritus at the Catholic University of America.

4 This paper was originally prepared for the Cambridge conference held in honour of Frank back in 2002. The papers from those proceedings were published in James Montgomery (ed.), *Arabic Theology, Arabic Philosophy. From the Many to the One: Essays in Celebration of Richard M. Frank* (Leuven: Peeters, 2006). Frank was unable to attend the conference, and the paper he prepared for the occasion was published in the aforementioned volume; a complete bibliography of his works is included in this text.

5 A more recent study was published under the title 'The Science of Kalām', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 2:1 (1992), pp. 7–37. Frank consistently emphasises the theoretical assumptions and methodological premises which separate philosophy from *kalām*. See also his 'The Kalâm, an Art of Contradiction-Making or Theological Science? Some Remarks on the Question', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 88:2 (1968), pp. 295–309, a review article of Michel Allard, *Le Problème des attributs divins dans la doctrine d'al-Ašʿarî et de ses premiers grands disciples* (Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1965).

6 Also relevant to this theme of the thoughts of leading Baṣran luminaries is Frank's 'The Autonomy of the Human Agent in the Teaching of ʿAbd al-Ǧabbār', *Le Muséon* 95 (1982), pp. 320–33, and included in volume 3 of the Variorum series.

7 Frank discusses the title of this work in detail in 'Elements in the Development of the Teaching of al-Ashʿarī', attempting to disprove Makdisi's argument that the work was not authored by al-Ashʿarī.

8 Frank's view is that al-Ghazālī's position on efficient causality, occasionalism, acquisition, and the orthodox notion of resurrection cannot be reconciled within the doctrines of the Ashʿarī school. Conversely, Frank disagrees with Makdisi and argues that the theological doctrines associated with the developed forms of Ashʿarism can be readily associated with the school's eponym, al-Ashʿarī. For the background to these arguments see George Makdisi, 'Ashʿarī and the Ashʿarites in Islamic Religious History: Part I', *Studia Islamica* 17 (1962), pp. 37–80; George Makdisi, 'Ashʿarī and the Ashʿarites in Islamic Religious History: Part 2', *Studia Islamica* 18 (1963), pp. 19–39; and Frank's 'Elements in the Development of the Teaching of

al-Ashʿarī', *Le Muséon* 104 (1991), pp. 141–90, reproduced in volume 2 of the Variorum series (no. 6). Frank states that it was al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* which confirmed his reservations concerning his commitment to Ashʿarism.

9 Richard Frank, *Al-Ghazālī and the Ashʿarite School*, p. x. Two great influences in his life, Gardet and Anawati, were of the view that although al-Ghazālī upheld the central theses of the school, he adopted key theological positions which were in conflict with the school's teachings. See p. 3. Cf. Herbert A. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes on Intellect: Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, and Theories of Human Intellect* (USA: Oxford University Press, 1992), and Michael E. Marmura, 'Ghazālī and Ashʿarism Revisited', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 12 (2002), pp. 91–110, which offers a different perspective as does Tobias Mayer's review article in *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 1 (1999), pp. 170–81. Mayer argues that the higher theology which Frank infers from al-Ghazālī's theology is essentially a form of higher Ashʿarism. The article by Frank which sets out the Ashʿarī angle on *taqlīd* is his 'Knowledge and *Taqlīd*: The Foundations of Religious Belief in Classical Ashʿarism', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 109 (1989), pp. 37–62.