A NEW STANDARD FOR AVICENNA STUDIES

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Yahya Michot's recent contribution marks an important advance in the study of Avicenna's life and thought, not only because it offers a critical edition, translation, and commentary of a relatively unknown letter by Avicenna (the Letter to the Vizier), but also because it emphasizes the importance of historiographical and philological methods. However, many of Michot's conclusions concerning the historical context of a number of Avicenna's works, as well as his decision to publish preliminary editions and translations of these works, are open to serious criticism. Many of these historical questions are addressed here, along with manuscript and recension studies of Avicenna's Huṣūl 'ilm wa-hikma and al-'Ahd.

I. MICHOT'S INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

In the past fifteen years, research into the life, times, and philosophy of Avicenna has witnessed a resurgence among scholars of medieval Islamic intellectual history. This resurgence can be traced in part to the 1988 publication of Dimitri Gutas's Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition in which scholars were treated to an evaluation of work on Avicenna since the millennial celebrations of the 1950s, an assessment of the then current state of research, and a detailed map—in Gutas's own study of Avicenna's intellectual inheritance and innovation—of the methodology and goals that would be necessary for further progress. It is often assumed that a name that looms as large across the horizon of intellectual history as that of Avicenna has surely been accorded enough scholarly activity to render the ambitions of new generations of scholars irrelevant. In fact, it is significant that of the fourteen texts forming the Avicennan corpus from which Gutas drew his references to the Aristotelian tradition (chapter one) not a single one was then or is now available in a properly critical edition. Indeed, of these fourteen texts and the twelve texts that Gutas designated “Major Philosophical Works” (with some common entries in the two sets), not one has even received the thorough study into the manuscripts, recensions, and textual history so fundamental to the task of critical editing. It is a wonder that any good work at all is done on Avicenna, considering the sorry state of his corpus.

So much for the texts. The other area toward which all good philologists direct their talents is context, however conceived (historical, social, political, intellectual, etc.). Here the efforts of Yahya (formerly Jean) Michot stand almost unparalleled. The investigation of the historical context, broadly apprehended, in which Avicenna lived and worked is certainly fraught with some dangers. While it was once thought that scholars of Avicenna were blessed with not only the master's autobiography, but also a biography by his disciple al-Jūzjānī, careful study of these texts highlights the importance of taking into account the rhetorical (or crassly put, the propagandistic) nature of medieval genres of writing. Undoubtedly there is much fact to be winnowed out of these writings, but it would be shortsighted to embrace all their particulars unreflectively. The historical evidence for the life and times of Avicenna that falls outside the writings of the master and his disciples brings additional


3 See Gutas's analysis of the Autobiography in Avicenna, 149ff., and now Michot's tantalizing remarks on al-Jūzjānī's Biography, which he describes as a "hagiographie plutôt que biographie," in Ibn Sind, 53*ff.; see also The Making of the Avicennan Tradition, 135ff.
problems, chief among which is its very paucity, at least of those pieces of evidence that can truly be identified as contemporaneous and thus, presumably, to be accorded sufficient evidentiary weight. However, it is becoming more and more clear that the outer margins of the Avicennan corpus contain much in the way of incidental (i.e., conversational or narrative-based) information that may help resurrect areas of historicity for our understanding of his life and times. Such “incidentalia” have the added benefit of being less mindfully constructed than the “facts” of the very self-conscious autobiography and biography. Here, with the exception of the correspondence that makes up Avicenna’s al-Mudbâhattât, we are wholly outside the corpus Gutas deemed “major.”

This reconstruction of previously unstudied aspects of Avicenna’s intellectual career has the province of Yahya Michot’s research to date. In many ways, his latest study represents the culmination of nearly ten years of research. In 1991, he first signaled, in great detail, his discovery of the codex Bursa Hüseyn Celebi 1194, copied in 675/1276–77 by ʿAbd Allāh b. Muhammad b. ʿUmar al-Khaṭīb, which contains some thirty of the smaller treatises of Avicenna. Among them is an untitled letter from Avicenna to one Abū Saʿd (who, however, is not named in the letter itself) which was unknown to the major bibliographers of Avicenna’s manuscripts up to that time (Michot referred to Ergin, Anawati, and Mahdavi); Michot dubbed it Demande de médiation. In the following year, Michot made a first attempt at summarizing (and partially translating) the Letter and discussing its historical context. He noted that al-Bayhaqi, in his Tatimmat šiwān al-ḥikma, provides a brief account of one Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis al-Kirmānī with whom Avicenna engaged in a debate that degenerated into insult and accusation, as a result of which Avicenna wrote to the vizier Abū Saʿd al-Hamadhānī requesting that formal judgment be passed on Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis. Apparently, Avicenna was close enough to Abū Saʿd to have dedicated to him his Adḥāwiyā fi ʿl-maʿād sometime before the debate.

In the same study, Michot first suggested an identification for this little-known Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis al-Kirmānī as the ghulām of the philosopher al-ʿAmīrī (d. 381/991) mentioned by al-Tawḥīdī as the author of a short work on logic sent to him sometime between 373–75/983–85. Of even greater importance, Michot drew out the connection between Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis and Miskawayh that Avicenna makes in a letter to Bahmanyār in the Mudbāhattât, and he noted that the animosity Avicenna displays toward Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis in that letter (and in fact throughout the various texts of the Mudbāhattât) accords with the poor relations between the two evident in the Letter to the Vizier. Michot also went on to identify this Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis as the messenger who brought the questions on logic from the scholars of Shirāz to Avicenna; this, however, is less likely. Considering the social status of Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis, both with regard to his age and his

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4 As Jean Michot, “Un important recueil avicennien du VIIIe/XIIe S.: la Majmūʿa Hüseyn Celebi 1194 de Brousse,” Bulletin de philosophie médiévale 33 (1991): 121–29. There (p. 122) he noted that the title page of the codex states that it contains forty-five treatises by Ibn Sīnā; we must imagine either a faulty count (consider the treatment of Uṣūn al-ḥikma as two treatises, perhaps by the original cataloguer of the manuscript, or the loss of the other treatises.

5 Osman Ergin, Ibn Sinā bibliografiyası (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1956).


9 Avicenna actually uses terminology associated with the legal fatwā; see, e.g., Michot’s edition, Ibn Sinā, 9.12.

10 Michot has consistently appeared unaware that al-Bayhaqi’s information is based solely on the introductions to the Letter to the Vizier and the Adḥāwiyā and thus does not constitute external evidence. In other words, al-Bayhaqi knew nothing more about Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis al-Kirmānī than what he was able to glean from the Avicenna corpus itself (compare his choice of language to describe the respective accusations of Avicenna and Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis, e.g., qillat al-ʿināyāt bi-šīnaʿātī ʿl-manṭiq and al-ghalat waʾl-mughālata (Tatimmat šiwān al-ḥikma, ed. M. Shaftī, Lahore, 1351/1932, 33.1–2), both of which appear in the introduction to Avicenna’s Letter to the Vizier (ed. Michot, 2.3–4).

11 For this identification, Michot largely relied on the study by Wadād al-Qādī, “Kitāb Šiwān al-Ḥikma: Structure, Composition, Authorship and Sources,” Der Islam 58 (1981): 87–124, who first suggested that this Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis may have been the author of the Šiwān al-ḥikma. While I agree with Michot that this Abū ʿl-Ṣāmis is probably the same as Avicenna’s debating opponent, I note Joel Kramer’s hesitancy (which Michot has not remarked upon) in ascribing the Šiwān al-ḥikma to him; see Kramer, Philosophy in the Renaissance of Islam: Abū Suʿaymān al-Sījistānī and his circle (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 119ff.
intellectual reputation, both apparent in Avicenna’s own epithets of him (see Letter to the Vizier, ed. Michot, I), it is very difficult to believe that he would serve in such a capacity.\(^\text{12}\)

In the same 1992 article, Michot also tentatively identified the recipient of the Letter to the Vizier as Abū Saʿīd Muhammad b. Ismāʿīl b. al-Ḥādí, mentioned by Hīlāl b. al-Muḥammad al-Ṣāḥib in the extant remains of his History as vizier of the Būyid Majd al-Dawla in 392/1002. This Abū Saʿīd later served Badr b. Ḥasan-awāy, Kurdish amir in Ḥamadhān, for which service we have the date 393/1003 again from Hīlāl.\(^\text{13}\) Finally, Michot localized and dated the Avicenna-Abū l-Qāsim al-Kirmānī debate and the resulting Letter to the Vizier to Rayy in 405/1014–15. In the present work and as a result of further research in the Avicenna corpus, particularly the Letter to the Scholars of Baghdad, which also gives an oblique account of Avicenna’s meeting with Abū l-Qāsim, Michot revises his earlier conclusion and now, rightly it seems, maintains that the debate and the subsequent letter occurred in Ḥamadhān.\(^\text{14}\)

That Abū l-Qāsim al-Kirmānī was involved in the philosophical correspondence that constitutes the Mubāḥathāt, albeit through the mediation of Avicenna’s student Bahmanyār, was brought into further focus in Michot’s 1997 translation of one of the letters in that collection.\(^\text{15}\) In the introduction to his translation, Michot presented in full detail for the first time his theory concerning the chronology of the texts that bear on the Avicenna-Abū l-Qāsim al-Kirmānī relationship. Much of his chronology theory is left implicit in his latest work, so a few words should be said about it, lest it become the object of scholarly consensus.

In contradiction to the conclusions of Dimitri Gutas,\(^\text{16}\) who maintained a relatively late dating for the Mubāḥathāt, Michot has argued for an earlier dating, at least of the letter al-Mubāḥathā al-thālīlītha (Mubāḥathā III). His argument rests on the facts that it contains references to Abū l-Qāsim and that Avicenna’s disparagement of Abū l-Qāsim therein is similar to his tone in the Letter to the Vizier. Now, since, the Letter to the Vizier was most likely written in 405/1014–15 (and there is relatively good evidence for this), so too, according to Michot, the Mubāḥathāt, or at least Mubāḥathā III, was probably written around 406/1016.\(^\text{17}\) This theory requires a huge leap of faith, not only because topicality should never be ignored, a priori, to determine chronology but also, more importantly, in many cases it is in direct conflict with other information we have about the dating of Avicenna’s works. Thus, because the discussions in Mubāḥathā III, composed supposedly in 406/1016, address problems found only in Kitāb al-Nafs of the Shīfā,\(^\text{2}\) and this work is referred to regularly in it, Michot would have us believe that that book of the Shīfā was written prior to 406/1016.\(^\text{18}\) Even more unlikely is Michot’s argument that Avicenna’s statement at the beginning of the Mubāḥathā III concerning a “promise” that he has fulfilled for Bahmanyār refers to his composition of the Ishārat wa-l-tanbihāt.\(^\text{19}\) With this slim evidence, Michot believes that the Ishārat itself must have been written just after Kitāb al-Nafs. But because Avicenna actually refers to one section of the Logic of the Shīfā in the Ishārat, that part of the Shīfā\(^\text{2}\)

\(^{12}\) See William E. Gohlman, The Life of Ibn Sinā (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1974), 77ff., for details on this correspondence. Avicenna’s responses to the Questions on Logic from the scholars of Shirāz, known alternately as al-Ajwība “an al-masāʾil il al-ṭishrīnī, “Iṣhrān mas’ala fi l-māntiq, and al-Masāʾ il al-gharībīya, have been edited by M. T. Dānishpazhūh as “Al-Masāʾ il al-gharība al-ṭishrīnī,” in Collected Texts and Papers on Logic and Language, ed. M. Mohageh and T. Izzut (Tehran, 1974), 81–103. For additional details concerning the identity of the Abū l-Qāsim mentioned by al-Jūzjānī in the Biography as the messenger for this correspondence, see The Making of the Avicennan Tradition, 166ff. Another messenger also known as Abū l-Qāsim, and this time serving as the intermediary in the Avicenna-Bīrūnī debate, can also be discounted; see The Making of the Avicennan Tradition, 177 n. 42.

\(^{13}\) This information is based on W. Madelung’s essay “Abū l-Kayr b. al-Ḵamār” in EIr, 1: 330–31 and reiterated again by Michot in the present work, 28*-31*.

\(^{14}\) As a result of this revision, Michot no longer believes that that book of the Mubāḥathāt, or at least Mubāḥathā III, was written around 406/1016.\(^\text{17}\) This theory requires a huge leap of faith, not only because topicality should never be ignored, a priori, to determine chronology but also, more importantly, in many cases it is in direct conflict with other information we have about the dating of Avicenna’s works. Thus, because the discussions in Mubāḥathā III, composed supposedly in 406/1016, address problems found only in Kitāb al-Nafs of the Shīfā, and this work is referred to regularly in it, Michot would have us believe that that book of the Shīfā was written prior to 406/1016.\(^\text{18}\) Even more unlikely is Michot’s argument that Avicenna’s statement at the beginning of the Mubāḥathā III concerning a “promise” that he has fulfilled for Bahmanyār refers to his composition of the Ishārat wa-l-tanbihāt.\(^\text{19}\) With this slim evidence, Michot believes that the Ishārat itself must have been written just after Kitāb al-Nafs. But because Avicenna actually refers to one section of the Logic of the Shīfā in the Ishārat, that part of the Shīfā

\(^{15}\) As J. Michot, “La réponse d’Avicenne à Bahmanyār et al-Kirmānī: Présentation, traduction critique et lexique arabe-français de la Mubāḥathā III,” Le Muséon 110.1–2 (1997): 143–221. Michot deserves high praise for this article, the first integrated translation with commentary of any of the letters of the Mubāḥathāt.

\(^{16}\) “Le répons,” 141ff.\(^\text{17}\) Ibid., 158.

\(^{18}\) Cf. the chronology of the parts of the Shīfā by Dimitri Gutas in Avicenna, 104–5.

\(^{19}\) Avicenna says (Kitāb al-Mubāḥathāt, ed. M. Bidārḵān, Qum: Muḥārat-i Amlī, 1992, par. 47): “What he (i.e., Bahmanyār) thanked me for was a promise I made to that friend.” In The Making of the Avicennan Tradition, 216ff., I maintain that what Avicenna refers to here is the letter Mubāḥathā III itself.
must have been written before the Ishārāt. His chronology for these texts, then, is Kitāb al-Nafs of the Shīfā—Logic parts of the Shīfā—al-Ishārāt—Mubāḥathā III. Clearly, the faulty first premise of Michot’s theory (i.e., since Abū ‘l-Qāsim plays a role in both the Letter to the Vizier and Mubāḥathā III, both texts must have been written around 406/1016) produced an alternate chronology for much of Avicenna’s corpus that cannot be reconciled with the internal and external facts of that tradition.

This theory underlies much of Michot’s introductory discussion in Ibn Sīnā, lettre au vizier Abū Sa‘īd. And while it cannot be seriously entertained, the impetus behind Michot’s research, that is, to discover in other hitherto unexamined texts more clues as to the intellectual relationship between Avicenna and Abū ‘l-Qāsim and its historical context, is to be commended. Thus, in fleshing out the details of that relationship in his introductory essay, Michot draws on a number of other little-known texts by the participants in the debate. In Avicenna’s Letter to the Scholars of Baghdad (Risāla ilā ‘ulāmā’ Baghdadād, edited by Ihsan Yarshater, not as Michot credits in Ibn Sīnā, 10* n. 1, M. T. Dānishpazhūhī), we are provided with an account of the meeting between a “man from Bukhārā,” i.e., Avicenna, and an advanced scholar (al-shaykh al-kabīr), i.e., Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Kirmānī, upon Avicenna’s arrival in Hamadhan. The purpose of the letter is a request that the scholars of Baghdad judge between the views of Avicenna and Abū ‘l-Qāsim on logic, since according to Abū ‘l-Qāsim, he derives his opinions from them. It is on this basis of this letter that Michot is able to localize the debate recounted in the Letter to the Vizier to Hamadhan, shortly after Avicenna’s arrival there in 405/1014–15.

The connection between Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Kirmānī, Avicenna’s intellectual adversary, with the scholars of Baghdad, who must have included the likes of Yahyā b. ‘Adī, Abū Sulaymān al-Sijistānī, Abū ‘Ali b. al-Samḥī, and Abū ‘l-Faraj b. al-Ṭayyib (Ibn Sīnā, 21*), is an important addition to our evidence concerning Avicenna’s conceptualization of his “eastern” philosophy, rightly understood by Fīnes, Gutas and others, as an opposition to the overtly literal-minded commentators of Aristotle in Baghdad. Michot correctly interprets the evidence for further contextualizing the entire “eastern” aspect of Avicenna’s philosophy (88*ff.) as the product of a historically identifiable intellectual rivalry; this should put an end once and for all to the mythologizing tendencies exercised on Avicenna’s philosophy in connection with the “eastern” question first indulged in by the Ishrāqī school of post-medieval Iran and unfortunately carried over into critical modern scholarship.

Michot carries forward the creation of an Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Kirmānī “dossier” by suggesting that he is the author of an unedited work on astrology entitled al-Risāla fi uṣūl al-ahkām, extant in MS Bodleian Marsh 663 (copied in 640/1242), to which Avicenna may have directed his criticism in al-Risāla fi ʿibṭ al-ahkām al-nujūm, which he apparently wrote for his student Ibn Zayla. The ascription of the Risāla fi uṣūl al-ahkām to our Abū ‘l-Qāsim is certainly worth investigating further, particularly in relation to statements we can ascribe to him in the Mubāḥathāt that advocate the corporeality of the Agent Intellect. Michot provides manuscript facsimiles of the first lines of both treatises and translates the relevant passages, 22*–27*. Al-Birūnī’s reference to an Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-falsāfī in his Tafhim, cited by Michot, 23* n. 2, on the doctrine of friendship and animosity between the planets is particularly tantalizing in this regard.

While the disputes related to Abū ‘l-Qāsim in the Mubāḥathāt have largely to do with Avicenna’s theory of the soul, logic is clearly the underlying issue in the complaints against Abū ‘l-Qāsim that Avicenna raises in the Letter to the Vizier and, in its metaphysical application (with regard to Aristotle’s Categories), in the Letter to the Scholars of Baghdad. The tension between the employment of the dialectical syllogism in the medieval Islamic debate setting, and its misuse by Abū ‘l-Qāsim as fār; see the introduction to his edition, 69–71. Michot, Ibn Sīnā, 14*–15*, duly translates the passages from the Asfār and the Shīfā.

That said, Michot has added yet another element to the geographical metaphors with his comparison of the intellectual atmospheres of Hamadhan (see 35*–36*) and Isfahan (see 97*–99*).
a method of philosophical investigation, set against Avicenna's insistence on the demonstrative syllogism as the sole guarantor of philosophical verification, lies at the heart of their disputes. In elucidating Avicenna's reaction to Abū 'l-Qāsim, Michot has identified and translated passages in Kitāb al-Jadal, Mubahatha III, and al-Madkhal of the Shi'fā (respectively, 42*-47* and 69*-72*) in which Avicenna may obliquely be taking aim at Abū 'l-Qāsim. At the very least, it is clear that Avicenna regularly reiterates his commitment to the correct deployment of logic not only for particular philosophical questions, but more significantly as the means to ultimate eternal happiness (sa'āda).

Michot has also drawn upon the so-called ʿAhd of Avicenna to further buttress his argument for the centrality of logic to Avicenna's conception of human destiny. The ʿAhd, which Michot charmingly calls "a gentleman's agreement" (81*), has had an obscure place in the Avicennan bibliography, not only with regard to the purpose of its composition, but also as a result of the very complicated transmission process it has suffered. Michot's treatment of this background is almost flawless (79*ff.); for an expanded discussion of the different recensions, see here below. He has correctly identified what appears to be the original recension, published in Badawi's Arisṭū ʿinda l-ʿarab in 1947, and briefly traces the evolution of the text (what he calls its destinée curieuse) in later hands.

Michot locates the importance of the original version of the ʿAhd in the employment of the dual pronouns and conjugations; in his view, we have here an agreement between two individuals, one Avicenna, the other perhaps Bahmanyar, although it must be said that this is simply a conjecture. Michot believes (87*) that the ʿAhd may have been a "sorte d'accord d'armistice" between Avicenna and Bahmanyar after their dispute over Abū 'l-Qāsim's participation in the philosophical discussions that make up the Mubahāthāt, a dispute that reached its denouement in Mubahātha III. The pact into which they enter emphasizes the appropriate methodology of philosophical investigation and praxis: the employment of (Aristotelian) logic as the only means to philosophical truth and, ultimately, eternal happiness. Michot describes its aim as a program of the philosophical life focused on a purification of the soul and the actualization of the intellect (82*).

Michot is probably correct to link the ʿAhd to the context of the Letter to the Vizier and the Letter to the Scholars of Baghdad. While Michot's interpretation of the text as an armistice may be a bit fanciful, it is worth considering whether or not the ʿAhd can be seen as somehow comprising the conditions required of readers of the Ishārāt enunciated by Avicenna in another letter to Bahmanyar (Mubahātha I, ed. Badāwī, par. 2). But we should not overlook the possibility that here in the ʿAhd Avicenna was simply experimenting with another genre of writing in which he might re-articulate some of the central views of his epistemology. There is no question that Avicenna did engage in such literary experimentation. His al-Hidāya and al-Ishārāt are both written in a concise literary style that differs markedly from his other expositions (I have in mind particularly the Shi'fā). We might imagine that Avicenna, having reached a certain systematization of his philosophical ideas, located a new means of intellectual development in the experimentation with its exposition. Such literary experimentation was also put to other goals. Al-Jūzjānī tells us that Ibn Sīnā consciously composed letters in the style of the great epistolographers al-Ṣāḥib, Ibn al-ʿĀmid, and the Ṣāḥib Ibn ʿAbbād as part of his ruse to humiliate publicly the philologist Ibn Jābab. The ʿāhd or pact held an important place in the repertoire of medieval Islamic bureaucracy, the genres of which Avicenna shows every indication of having mastered.

The whole question of Avicenna's literary experimentation remains to be fully investigated, but if it is to be profitable, it must first be stripped of the terms employed in the endless debate about an "esoteric" Avicenna. The psychoanalytic history presented by Michot on this question does not represent a significant advance; in fact, phrases like "la bipolarité des écritures philosophiques d'Avicenne" (103*) border on recidivistic, as does Michot's suggestion for a psychoanalysis of the alimentary metaphors in Avicenna's works (110* n. 37). In the interpretation of medieval texts the easiest, and perhaps least responsible, solution to what modern authors might deem inconsistent is the suggestion of psychological bifurcation in the author. Michot has demonstrated his ability to draw upon historical context in the interpretation of Avicenna's works, and while this might be considered prosaic by some, it is in fact the methodology that holds the most promise for the future study of Avicenna.

Whether or not the ʿAhd can be directly connected to the rivalry between Avicenna and Abū 'l-Qāsim, Michot has done a service in bringing it to the attention of scholars and deserves even more credit as the first scholar to attempt a systematic translation (in appendix 2, 116ff.). For his translation, he used the original recension (for this terminology, see below), i.e., that found in MS Cairo

26 See Gohlman, Life, 68/69 for further details.
27 Could it not be just a literary analysis?
manuscripts and recensions could be made. In many of Aristotelian and edited with partial success by Badawi in Hikma 6M and alliteration of the string of verbs beginning with min. However, when Michot is right, he is often remarkably so: at least three of his corrections to Badawi's text follow the readings actually found in the manuscript (Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, Hikma 6M). The first is p. 122 n. 6: yata'addayāhā ms and Michot: yata'addayāhumā Badawi. In the other two cases, he correctly follows his other exemplars, and thereby returns Badawi's hyper-corrections to the original manuscript readings, viz., p. 123 n. 5: azīm ms and Michot: al-azīm Badawi, and 124.3: al-ladhdhāt ms and Michot: al-dhāt Badawi. This is all the more commendable since Michot did not have access to Hikma 6M for his translation. I offer here two minor suggestions for the future definitive edition and translation:

1. p. 121: Michot's translation "Ils ne permettront a aucune idée . . . sans l'effacer [Michot has corrected the manuscript reading masakhāhū to masahāhū]" should read "They will not abandon any [base] thought . . . before transforming it," i.e., keep the manuscript reading, since there appears to be a succession of incremental reactions to such base thoughts: transforming, overriding, eradicating, annihilating.

2. p. 122: In the active participle muqaddima (translated by Michot as "prémisses") may profitably be corrected to the verbal noun taqdimā, "advancing." This correction appears to be required if the succession of verbal nouns after the illā (taqdimā, tatrīya, taḥādīd) in this sentence is to remain consistent. Note also that Michot's translation of the final exceptive clause in this sentence misses the mark. We should translate "or [without] determining that a deep-seated disposition will become [li-taṣīr (?) Badawi: à devenir Michot: li-maṣīr correct Reisman] uppermost in the substance of the soul," instead of "ou une définition [appelée] à devenir une disposition enracinée, principale, dans la substance de l'âme."

However, Michot's laudable ambition to draw on previously unexamined texts begins to feel gratuitous as his introductory essay draws to a conclusion. In fact, considering the present state of our almost wholly negligible understanding of these areas of the Avicennan corpus, it may simply be dangerous without the necessary background investigations. Thus, there seems little real intention behind yet another provisional translation of part of the Risāla fi 'l-qadar (104*-111*) beyond a superficial comparison of the roles of the vizier Abū Sa‘īd and the Hāyy b. Yaqzān of the Risāla fi 'l-qadar (114*). Even more objectionable is Michot's treatment of two entries in the so-called Avicenna–Abū Sa‘īd b. Abī l-Khayr Correspondence. This correspondence requires a thorough textual and contextual study that simply could not have been accommodated in the present work. My preliminary investigations into 'the correspondence indicates that it consists of some authentic Avicennan letters to Bahmanyār and Ibn Zayla related in different ways to the philosophical correspondence that now makes up the Mubahihāt, some fragments of longer Avicennan works, and outright forgeries that emerged from the hagiographical tradition connected to Abū Sa‘īd b. Abī l-Khayr begun in the seventh/thirteenth century and happily propagated in the Ishrāqi tradition up to the present time. Michot notes (58*) that he was first led to investigate this series of letters in an attempt to verify whether or not the Abī Sa‘īd of the correspondence could in some way be identified as the vizier Abū Sa‘īd. He provides a general, if incomplete, conspectus (n. 4, spanning 58*-63*) that is valuable as a first in a European language but one wholly uninformed by the similar studies undertaken by M. T. Dānishpazhūh in 1952 and the now quite large literature on Abū Sa‘īd.30

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28 As Michot informed me in a private communication (May 19, 2001).

29 Alternately, if any correction to the text may be made, the second reaction, nasakhāhū ("overriding it") might profitably be corrected to masahāhū ("erasing it"), thus preserving the alliteration of the string of verbs beginning with mīm.

Michot's translation of the so-called Ḥusūl ʿilm waḥikna (120*-129*), a letter Avicenna probably wrote to Ibn Zayla but which was appropriated for the Avicenna–Abū Saʿīd Correspondence, should not have been undertaken in the present state of the texts. This fact has made the efforts Michot has exerted in what passes as a critical apparatus to the translation haphazard and decidedly uneven. Since Michot had no confidence in his base text, he had no properly scientific means to determine the value of the variants he selected from the other exemplars he used, none of which, again, inspire any confidence. These factors are problematic enough, but when we read that the reason for including the translation in the present study is that it was "certainly" composed in Isfahan (120*), we have to wonder why such an unsatisfactory endeavor was undertaken in the first place. For further details on the textual transmission of this work, see below.

In another entry in the Avicenna–Abū Saʿīd Correspondence, the so-called Risāla fi l-qadar (Du décret [divinit]), Michot detects an oblique attack on Abū l-Qāsim (see 64*-66*), especially the last page, concerning the term mutashāhhit and this appears to be sufficient for him to actually present an editio princeps and translation of the letter in appendix 1. Because of the complexity of the problems related to this putative letter, this is a highly regrettable decision. Briefly stated, it seems that this letter is actually a passage from Avicenna's Risāla fi l-qadar which was given an epistolary frame that linked it to the Avicenna–Abū Saʿīd Correspondence. The introduction of this forged epistolary frame indicates that this "letter" is intended to follow another entry in the correspondence, the Risāla fi l-sirr al-qadar, the attribution of which to Avicenna still remains open to speculation, despite George Hourani's attempt to explain away the disordered argumentation of the author by recourse to Straussian hermeneutics. While a trustworthy image of Avicenna's Lisān al-ʿarab was already blurred in the years following his death, a fact noted by the anonymous scribe who was able to copy only the more "marvelous" passages, we can be relatively confident that the passage reworked for the forged correspondence rightly belongs to Lisān al-ʿarab. This connection to Lisān al-ʿarab highlights two important points: we have good evidence for arguing against the authenticity of a correspondence between Avicenna and Abū Saʿīd b. Abī l-Khayr; and Michot, who was not aware of the connection, should have more carefully researched the texts he decided to include in the present study.

As a contribution to the future study of this text, I present here variants from Y(arshater)’s text of Lisān al-ʿarab, following M(ichot)’s line numbers (sequential across pp. 105–8). These variants should not be considered corrections to Michot’s texts; they are instead simply a record of the variants from another exemplar. Moreover, it is impossible to determine in every case what represents the actual readings of the manuscripts used by Yarshater and what are Yarshater’s own unsignaled conjectural emendations. However, there is enough information here to allow us to comment on Michot’s editorial choices:


See al-Jūzjāni’s remarks in Life, 72/73. The surviving fragments of Avicenna’s Lisān al-ʿarab have been edited by I. Yarshater in Panj risāla, 1–31.

For these remarks, see the introduction to Lisān al-ʿarab, ed. Yarshater, 1.
Michot’s extensive study of the context of the Letter to the Vizier might appear to overwhelm the significance of his edition and translation of the text itself. This would be an incorrect evaluation, since it is in this aspect that his serious contribution to Avicenna studies is to be located. A collation of the Letter in its single exemplar and in the often difficult, largely unpointed hand of the scribe (facsimile of the relevant folios provided by Michot, 143–60) makes apparent the erudition Michot brings to its decipherment. While the introductory essay emphasized the dispute between Avicenna and Abū l-Qāsim, on points of logic, those issues really form the background (and the subject of Avicenna’s digressions), to the specific differences of the debate itself. From Michot’s artful division of the Letter, it is clear that those differences concerned three questions of Aristotelian physics: the finiteness of bodies; infinity; and the dimensions and continuity of bodies. Since Michot generously provides a facsimile of the Letter to the Vizier, it behooves scholars to collate his text with the manuscript. Here I note the results of my own collation, along with some suggestions about critical editing in general and Michot’s editorial choices in particular. Abbreviations: B(ursa manuscript); M(michot).

A. Unattested Corrections and Omissions

6.4. baynahā M: minḥā B.
7.3. fiḥī M; fiḥā B.
9.5. fa-yaḵūnu M: fa-ṭakīnu B.
14.11. li-qa’imayn M: li-qa’imatayn B.
47.10. ḏū omit M.

B. Suggestions for Further Improvement

15.1. ta’assara reading by M: ta’ṣuru reading by Reisman.
21.10. bi-sawh hyper-correction by M: li-sawh B.
The manuscript reading should be kept. Translation: “in a claim that he put next on account of a negligence in the proof.”
22.11. ḥaddan inna conjectural reading M: khalā anna conjectural reading Reisman. Translation: “except that.” For khalā anna, see W. Wright, A Grammar of the Arabic Language (Cambridge, 1955) ii, 342B.
41.10. ḍan B: ḍ correct M. Keep reading of B.
43.3. Qāṭīghūryās B, M: <fi> Qāṭīghūryās added by Reisman.
47.1. a-yuzighu ‘l-kathir reading by M: al-zaygha ‘l-kathir a reading by Reisman. Translation: “May the most eminent Shaykh . . . reflect on this great departure from the rules of logic.”

C. Comments on Editorial Style and Practice

Michot has refined his editorial technique over the course of many years of research. On the whole, it is a style that does not sacrifice clarity in the interest of
succinctness. And since Arabic-Islamic studies has yet to standardize any of its editorial conventions, Michot's choices are as good as, and in most cases better, than others. I have only a few minor suggestions. Scribal contractions should be expanded (thus, for instance, 6.2, 24.1, 3.1, 23.7; lam yakun hādhā 'l-ittiṣālū mawjūdan at 53.10. Seclusions of words should be kept in the text between square brackets [ ], with a note indicating the identity of the editor. For example, the reading at 25.2 might better be rendered in the text ar̔usin [wa jābā] with a note "[wajaba] 'azalahū Michot" or some similar choice in the apparatus. So too 39.7: "[muhdā] 'azalahū Michot." Next, Michot's use of the em-dash to signify omission in the exemplar is not as clear as other possibilities; consider the note at 17.1 "—; 'alayhi B," which actually means that the manuscript reads 'alayhi 'alayhi. Finally, there are only a few typographical errors: 3.2. 8.10. in > an; 23.8. b.y.y.n > yubayyin; 24.7. inna > anna.

Michot's translation of the text is generally of a high quality, if somewhat literal at times, particularly with regard to technical terminology (for instance, ishtirāk is translated "utiliser de manière équivoque," and "équivocité" [see index, 79], when "homonymy" is really what is meant). The commentary is somewhat sparse, although Michot has identified nearly all of the classical references made by Avicenna; I note in passing that the translator of Aristotle's Metaphysics is commonly known as Uṣūt or Uṣūf, and not Asfāt. There is undoubtedly a great deal more information to be mined from the text, particularly with regard to Avicenna's presentation of certain philosophical concepts through comparison with what he says in his other works, but the text and Michot's useful translation are now available for such detailed studies.

Of inestimable value are the extremely detailed indices of Arabic terms for the Letter to the Vizier and the Risālat al-qaḍāʾ, along with the technical terminology of his entire introductory essay and translations. Such indices have become a highly valuable and much appreciated staple of Michot's work. I am certainly not alone in hoping that all of the indices of his published works will soon form the basis for an ongoing published lexicon of Avicenna's terminology.

III. TEXTUAL NOTES ON THE ḤUṢUL AND THE 'AHD

It is becoming more and more clear that the major desideratum of Avicenna studies is the codicological and philological study of the transmission of his works. The uses, and misuses, to which the corpus was subjected in the history of Islamic philosophy after Avicenna have had a major impact on their present-day state (and interpretation), and until these are understood and plotted properly, the myths about Avicenna will continue to hamper investigations. Michot chose to include translations of at least three brief works by Avicenna in his discussion of the context in which Avicenna wrote his Letter to the Vizier. I have addressed some of the problems with his treatment of the so-called Risālat al-qaḍāʾ above. Here I present theories concerning the textual transmission of the two other texts, the so-called Ḥuṣul ʿilm wa-ḥikma and the ʿAḥd, in order to establish a framework in which critical editions and translations can be carried out.

A. The Recensions of the Ḥuṣul ʿilm wa-ḥikma

Michot is probably correct in arguing that this letter was written to Avicenna's student Ibn Zayla and not, as Mahdawi (M4w) maintained, to Abū Saʿīd b. Abī Ḥayr;37 however, it must be noted that no attempt to authenticate the letter as Avicennan has yet been undertaken. The very important exemplar Berlin Landberg 368 identifies the recipient as Abū Manṣūr al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. Zayla, and a later scribal introduction in another family of the same recension states that Avicenna wrote the letter to Ibn Zayla "when he [i.e., Ibn Zayla] intended to go into seclusion" (see below, First Recension).38 The presence of this work in one of the two hagiographies of Abū Saʿīd is no indication of an authentic connection to him. Fritz Meier (Abū Saʿīd-i Abū Ḥayr, 28) has established that the letter appears in a later supplement to the manuscripts of Jamāl al-Dīn

37 Mahdawi presented (no. 4w in his Fihrist, 8) a single line of the text as evidence for his argument that the recipient of the letter was Abū Saʿīd, without explaining why the line was significant in this regard.

38 This gloss may be a conjecture on the part of an unknown scholar who read Avicenna's Risāla fi ḫīṭal akkām al-nūjūm, also addressed to Ibn Zayla, where we learn that Avicenna's express intention in writing the treatise was that it might serve Ibn Zayla as a sort of reference book that he could consult "during [his] times of retreat (avqāṭ al-khalāvat)"; see Ulken, Opuscules, 2: 51.4 and Michot, Ibn Sīnā, 26* where he has quietly, and rightly, corrected Ulken's reading al-ḥ.l.wāt, presumably on the basis of Ms Leiden Warner Or. 1020.
Abū Ṭuḥta ABU ṬUḤTA ALLĀH'S ḤĀṬIṣ u sukhanān-ī Abū Saʿīd-i Abū 'l-Khayr Mayhanī (edited by Īraj Āfsārī, Tehran 1341Sh./1963, 113–16). We might imagine that this addition to the hagiography came after the creation of the correspondence as a whole, or at least after the appropriation of the Ḥuṣūl.

The following manuscripts (arranged here chronologically) are only those that I have personally examined, but they are sufficient for a preliminary assessment of the textual tradition.39

39 The following supplemental list of manuscripts, in chronological order, is intended to update that of Mahdavi, although I am certain that yet more copies will be discovered. "leurs as-

 RAW TEXT END
### Table 1

**Recensions of Ḥusūl ẓīḻm wa-ḥikm̱a**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Recension</th>
<th>First Recension</th>
<th>First Recension</th>
<th>Abridgement</th>
<th>Second Recension: Abū Saʿīd Correspondence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Family</strong></td>
<td><strong>Second Family</strong></td>
<td><strong>Third Family</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin Lbg. 368</td>
<td>Ahmet III 3447 (2)</td>
<td>Ahmet III (1)</td>
<td>Nur. 4894 (1)</td>
<td>Cam. Browne X.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nur. 4894 (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mishkāt 861</td>
<td>Mishkāt 1079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ham. 1448 (2)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ülken, Opuscules 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Al-Ḳashkūl, Bulaq 1288/1871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intro. to al-Najāt 1331/1912</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Remarks on the Recensions

In Table 1, I list only the more important exemplars of the first and second recensions of the Ḥusūl, further subdivided into three families of manuscripts for the first recension. Note also the abridgement, which appears to exist in only one known exemplar.

**i. The Three Families of the First Recension**

The manuscripts of this recension are divided into three families, based upon substantive variants at key stages in their respective texts. Less significant, but certainly in keeping with the recension history, is the addition of an introductory scribal passage in the third family explaining that the letter is said to have been addressed to both Ibn Zayla and Abū Saʿīd:

Risālā il-ḥakīm Abī ʿAlī al-Ḥusayn Ibn Sinā ilā Ibn Zayla jawwāban ʿan kitābī; ilādī kataba īlayhi ḥīnā azama ʿala l-ʿuzlāt, wa-qīla īlā l-ṣhaykhī Quṭbī l-Awliyāʾ Abī Saʿīd ibn Abī l-Khayr qaddasa īlahu rūḥāhū l-ʿazz.

#### VARIATION IN THE THREE MANUSCRIPT FAMILIES OF THE FIRST RECENSION

**EXAMPLE 1**

First Family

... waʿl-ḥarīfī fi sabīlihī waʿl-akhdīhī fi samti l-ṭaqābbulī waʿl-tawlīyātī shatra l-ṭaqarrubī īlā īlāhī waʿl-tawājjihī tilqāʾa waḥīhī . . .

Second and Third Families

... waʿl-ḥarīfī fi sabīlihī waʿl-tawlīyātī shatra l-ṭaqarrubī īlā īlāhī waʿl-tawājjihī tilqāʾa waḥīhī waʿl-akhdīhī fi samti l-ṭaqayyul biḥī . . .

---

45 I am unaware of any study of this manuscript, but my review of the text of the Ḥusūl in the codex (I thank Y. Michot for generously forwarding a photocopy to me) indicates that it is copied in a relatively late taʿlīq hand.

46 Copied by Muḥammad b. Ḥājjī Nād Ṭālī for Ḥājjī Muḥammad Sharīkhān in Maḥbād, according to Dānīshpāzhūḥ, Mishkāt Cat., 3: 1, 176–77.

47 Dānīshpāzhūḥ notes (Mishkāt Cat., 3: 1, 45) that the thirty-fourth treatise in this codex was copied by Muḥammad Ṣāḥīḥ Kārāmī in 1045, but does not indicate a copy date for the other thirty-four treatises.

48 These examples do not take into account variants that can positively be attributed to scribal error.
EXAMPLE 2

First and Second Families
... wa-sa'aluhu an yuwaqqiyahä li-ukhrähu fi ildahu wa-
yuthabbita qadamahä ’alä mà tawafta'ahä wa-lä yu-
laqtiyahä ilä mà lalayhı takhafta'ahä wa-yazidahä ilä
hidâyatihi ıyyahu hidâyatan wa-ilä dirâyatihi litt atähü
dirâyatan. innahü ’l-h5di ’l-muyassiru wa-huwa ’l-mudab-
biru ’l-muqqaddiru . . .

Third Family
... wa-sa'aluhä an yuwaqqiyahä li-ukhrähu fi ildähu wa-
yuthabbita qadamahä ’alä mà tawafta'ahä wa-lä yu-
laqtiyahä ilä mà lalayhı takhafta'ahä wa-an yazidahä ilä hi-
dâyatihi ıyyahu hidâyatan wa-ilä dirâyatihi litt atähü
dirâyatan. innahü walliyu dhälika wa'l-qādiru 'alayhi . . .

EXAMPLE 3

First Family
... kāna amra wa-aghḍāh

Second and Third Families
kāna aghḍāh wa-amra

EXAMPLE 4

First and Second Families
wa-lan takhuusa 'l-nafṣu 'ani 'l-daran mà 'ltafatat ıla qila
wa-qāla

Third family
omit

EXAMPLE 5

First and Third Families
... wa-munāqashati wa-jidāli wa-'nfa'elat bi-ḥālin mina 'l-
aḥwāli li-magālin aw fe'ālin

Second Family
omit

It should be immediately obvious from the preceding
data that either some form of contamination has taken
place among the three families or a missing link in the
stemma must be posited, since it is otherwise difficult to
explain the overlap in variants which the second family
shares alternately with the first and third families. Set-
ting aside the question of contamination for now, it may
be observed that the first family is clearly the more trust-
worthy, if only because its reading in example 1 is the
correct one. Using the Berlin manuscript as the base
text, then, it is possible to argue that its readings in all
examples probably approximate most closely those of
Avicenna’s own copy (excepting scribal error). Explain-
ing the descent of the second and third families is some-
what more difficult. Both their shared reading in example
1 and their shared reading in example 3 tell us that they
are related, but not the nature of that relationship. To ex-
plain their respective omissions in examples 4 and 5 we
must suppose at least one intermediary between the first
family for both of them, since we cannot assume lines of
descent [second family > third family] or [third family >
second family] on the basis of these mutually exclusive
omissions. Furthermore, we must assume that this pos-
ited intermediary contained the reading of the first fam-
ily in example 2, the error exhibited in the second and
third families in example 1, and the common variant in
example 3.49 The variant reading of the third family in
example 2 we might imagine to be characteristic of that
family only.50 The respective omissions in examples 4
and 5 are also to be limited to their respective families.
Thus, we have a provisional stemma of the manuscript
families of the first recension as follows:

Avicenna’s holograph

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>first family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.α</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

second family  third family

So much for families of manuscripts. The next step is
the elimination of exemplars. The Berlin manuscript, as
the base text, is to be kept. However, its date of coping,
estimated by W. Ahlwardt to be around 880/1475–76, is
a little later than the earliest of the exemplars in the sec-
cond and third families, Sc. Ahmet III 3447, dated by F. E.
Karatay to 866/1462. Since the above exercise has sug-
gested that those families derive from the first family, we
might posit an earlier exemplar from which the Berlin
manuscript descends. In the case of the second and third
families, the respective dates of mss Ahmet III 3447

49 For a possible descendant of this posited intermediary, see
below under Second Recension.
50 With regard to this variant, it is perhaps significant, or at
least puzzling, to note that the concluding phrase innahü wa-
lyu dhälika wa'l-qādiru 'alayhi has a parallel later in the text
of the third family alone where we find annahü walihi wa'l-
qādiru 'alayhi (e.g., Nur. 4894, 307v, line 10); the first and
second families have only annahü walihi (e.g., Berlin, Lbg.
368, 109v, line 14).
(dated 866/1462) and Nur. 4894 (dated circa eleventh/seventeenth century) suggest that the latter can be eliminated. Ms Hamidiye 1448 has not, to my knowledge, been dated, but the script suggests that it is rather late, perhaps as late as or later than Nur. 4894. This is the extent of research to date on these manuscripts of the Ḥuṣūl; once the task of editing the text is underway, further refinements will no doubt emerge.

ii. The Abridgement of the First Recension

Separative variant:

wa-sa'ātalhī an yuwaqqahī li-ukhrāhu fī ʿulāhu. innahū `l-hādī `l-muyassiru wa-huwa `l-mudabbiru `l-muqaddiru.

This curious abridgement, entitled Makātīb ild . . . Abū Saʿīd, and which I find only in Nuruosmaniye 4894 (ff. 246v–247r) agrees with the first and second families in the reading of example 2 above (once the omission is taken into account), agrees with the second and third families in the reading of example 1, and contains the text shared by the first and third families in example 5. All of this suggests that it was made from the posited intermediary between the first family and the second and third families (α in the above stemma).

iii. The Second Recension with Epistolary Introduction: Abū Saʿīd's Question to Ibn Sinā

Much work remains to be done on the textual history of the letters that collectively constitute what is now called the Avicenna–Abū Saʿīd b. Abī l-Khayr Correspondence, but research to date leads to the definite conclusion that it is a product of a later Sufi or Ishrāqi tradition that sought to make of Abū Saʿīd an intellectual that he most likely was not, through an epistolary association with Avicenna that most certainly did not occur. The Ḥuṣūl is one such letter by Avicenna that was adopted and modified by the anonymous creator(s) of this series of correspondence. In one stage of this adoption, the Ḥuṣūl alone was simply given some form of a title that included Abū Saʿīd as the addressee (see the manuscripts listed above). In the more developed version of this modification, we find not only the text of the Ḥuṣūl but also an additional introduction in which Abū Saʿīd, while asserting his own achievements on the path of piety, asks Avicenna to enumerate the grounds of his own success on the path (1).52

The earliest date to which I have been able to assign the inclusion of this version of the Ḥuṣūl in the forged correspondence is that of the composition of Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-ʿAmīlī's (d. 1030/1621) al-Kashkul, i.e., 1002/1593.53 None of the three manuscripts of this version that I have examined (Cambridge Browne X.1; Mishkāt 861; and Mishkāt 1079) predates the Kashkul, but it is unlikely, if not impossible, that al-ʿAmīlī himself was responsible for the introduction.

The text of the manuscripts of the Ḥuṣūl in this recension exhibits all of the characteristics of the posited intermediary between the first family and the second and third families of the first recension, viz., the reading of the first and second families in example 2 above, the readings of the second and third families in examples 1 and 3, but the presence of the respective passages missing in the second and third families in examples 4 and 5. This fact may allow us to conjecture that the forged introduction was added to the Ḥuṣūl at some point before the dating of the earliest exemplar of another descendant of that posited intermediary, i.e., Ahmet III 3447, dated 866/1462.

It may be noted in passing that the exemplar in the codex Cairo Dār al-Kutub Majāmī Taymūr 200 (ff. 223r–224v), which Michot drew upon for his translation and which also has the forged introduction, appears to be a contaminated witness that mixes the readings of the first and second families in example 2 above, the readings of the second and third families in examples 1 and 3, but the presence of the respective passages missing in the second and third families in examples 4 and 5. This fact may allow us to conjecture that the forged introduction was added to the Ḥuṣūl at some point before the dating of the earliest exemplar of another descendant of that posited intermediary, i.e., Ahmet III 3447, dated 866/1462.

51 Fritz Meier, who discounted the legends of a meeting between Avicenna and Abū Saʿīd, but who suggested that the correspondence may be authentic, offered another theory (Abū Saʿīd-i Abī l-Khayr, 26–29): that the hagiographers of Abū Saʿīd suppressed the correspondence since the fact that Abū Saʿīd would have to ask Avicenna anything suggested he lacked certain knowledge. This is a novel solution to the problem, but it is not based on a study of the actual texts that make up the correspondence.

52 The text of this introduction may be found in al-ʿAmīlī's al-Kashkul, 355.

53 See C. E. Bosworth's extensive study of this work, Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-ʿAmīlī and His Literary Anthologies (Manchester: Univ. of Manchester, 1989), 29. Bosworth does not make reference to the copy of the Ḥuṣūl contained in the Kashkul. The publication of al-Kashkul used for this study is Bulaq 1288/1871 (Bosworth's sigla B). The Ḥuṣūl is found on pp. 355–57.
Finally, it omits wa-amrā in example 3. It is difficult to determine its place in the textual transmission, but this is at any rate irrelevant, since it would not survive the elimination process.\(^5\)

An interesting observation is that the manuscripts of this recension differ in some important respects from the text found in al-‘Āmilī’s al-Kashkūl. These differences are largely ones of omission in al-‘Āmilī’s version, and we might suppose they are either the result of al-‘Āmilī’s effort at some brevity in his otherwise large collection of Arabic literature, or reflect an editorial process that al-‘Āmilī felt should be applied to the version he had before him.\(^5\)

iv. The Appropriation of Part of the Ḥusūl for the Wašīya

Michot (79*-88*) correctly notes that the Ḥusūl bears comparison with a version of Avicenna’s ‘Ahd that circulated under the title Wašīya, addressed to Abū Sa’īd (see 80*), most readily available in the publication Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyin (Cairo, 1910), Iz-līt.\(^6\) See the discussion below on the ‘Ahd for a detailed collation of these passages.

B. The Recensions and Printed Versions of the ‘Ahd

The textual study of Avicenna’s ‘Ahd is, in a broad sense, less complicated than that necessary for the Ḥusūl, if only because we have Badawi’s relatively serviceable edition which, in turn, was based on the very important MS Cairo Dār al-Kutub Hikma 6M.\(^5\) Here I have divided the various accessible manuscripts and publications into four groups. Of those groups only the first, comprising the original recension, is of any importance. The remaining groups are listed only so that readers of Avicenna’s works may be aware of their inherent problems. A re-edition of the ‘Ahd would certainly be desirable, if only to identify and remove any of Badawi’s hyper-corrections that may have been overlooked by Michot in his translation. Only those manuscripts accessible for this study have been listed below;\(^5\) all of the known publications, however, are represented.

i. Original Recension, Cast in the Dual. Incipit after basmala:

\[
\text{hādā mā ʾaḥadā ilāhu biḥti fulānun wa-fulanun bāʾda mā ʾaraḏā rabbahumā wa-ilāhahumā wa-wāḥiba ʾl-ṣaqī qawwātī lahumā...}
\]

a. Manuscripts


b. Publications

1. ʿAbd al-Rahmān Badawi, Arīstā ʿinda ʾl-ʾArab, 247–49, on the basis of Cairo Hikma 6M.

ii. Truncated\(^5\) Recension, Cast in Singular

In addition to transforming the grammar and syntax of the original into the singular from the dual, this recension recasts the opening statement and omits the following lines of Badawi: 247.1–7, 9–17 (the second omission is replaced with the phrase wa-tahṣīla kamālihā min jiḥati ʾl-ṣāmiʿ wa-l-hikma\(^6\) [with scribal variation]), along with the scattered clauses (particularly wa-lā yatāʿayānīḥī ʾcamdan aw saḥwan at Badawi 248.2–3). Incipit after basmala:

\[
\text{hādā mā ʾaḥadā ilāhu biḥti fulānun wa-fulanun bāʾda mā ʾaraḏā rabbahumā wa-ilāhahumā wa-wāḥiba ʾl-ṣaqī qawwātī lahumā...}
\]

54 An alternate theory for its place in the stemma would be as a descendant of the posited intermediary between the first family and the second and third families, but we would have to infer an additional apograph to account for the contamination of its reading in example 2. It would be far too fortuitous for this contamination to be attributable to scribal error. Furthermore, this contamination likely took place after the addition of the forged introduction; this fact makes it all the more difficult to assume a direct line from the posited intermediary.

55 These omissions are not the same as those in the abridgement.

56 Correct Michot’s reference to the pagination ib-līt at 80* n. 3 and 120* n. 3.

57 For a thorough codicological study of this codex which stresses a pedigree that may ultimately go back to Avicenna, see Dimitri Gutas, “Notes and Texts from Cairo Manuscripts, II: Texts from Avicenna’s Library in a Copy by ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq aš-Šiḡnāḥi,” Manuscripts of the Middle East 2 (1987): 8–17.

58 I note, for instance, that there are two copies of the ‘Ahd in MS Bursa Hüseyin Celebil 1194; see Michot, “Un important recueil,” 127–28.

59 The term “truncated” applies to anything whose top or bottom has been cut off; here it is the top, or beginning of the text that has been removed.

60 Might this phrase have given rise to the (modern) title Ḥusūl ʾilm wa-hikma, particularly when we consider the concatenation of the ‘Ahd and the Ḥusūl in the creation of the Wašīya?
theless, once the interruption is taken into account, this version contains all of the text of the truncated recension, and so differs from the next version.

iii. Damaged Version of the Truncated Recension

This version begins in the same fashion as the truncated version, in both its consecutive and interrupted states, but is distinguished from them by the additional absence of the text corresponding to Badawi 247.8–248.3. This large lacuna can only be explained by the loss of a folio in the manuscript used for publication and, at any rate, makes the text senseless. Incipit after basmala:

qāla . . . fi ʾahdīn ʾāhada ilāha taʿālā li-nafṣihī baʾda an
ashkāra fihi ilā nafṣihī annahū ʾāhada ilāha bi-taṣkīyatī nafṣihī 
bi-miqdārī mā wahabahu laḥā min quwwāti ilā-yukhrājū 
minī l-ʾquwwāti ila ʾl-fāʾl . . .

a. Manuscripts

1. Koprulü 1589 (753/1353), f. 286v. in margin. 
2. Ahmet III 3447, ff. 149v–150r. This exemplar has the missing text of Badawi 247.9–17 in the margin as a correction (gaḥḥa) but has the phrase wa-taḥṣīla kamālīhā min jiḥati ʾl-ʾfilmi waʾl-ḥikma which replaces that text in this version in the matn; this leads one to believe that the marginal “correction” is in fact a variant from another exemplar (i.e., a nuskhā note).
3. Nuruosmaniye 4894, ff. 495r–v. Many, if not all, of the treatises in this codex appear to have been copied from Ahmet III 3447; this is the case with the ʾAhd. In Nur. 4894, the marginal note found in Ahmet III 3447 which adds the text of Badawi 247.9–17 was inserted into the matn before the phrase wa-taḥṣīla kamālīhā min jiḥati ʾl-ʾfilmi waʾl-ḥikma which was intended to replace that text in this version.

b. Publications


b. Published Exemplars

1. In the top and left margins of ʿĀbd al-Dīn al-Shirāzī’s Sharḥ al-hidāya al-athirīya (Lithograph Tehran, 1313, 1895–96), 336–38:

This version was originally the truncated recension cast in the singular; this fact is evident from the omissions of Badawi 247.9–17 and the clause at Badawi 248.2–3, both of which it shares with the truncated recension. However, when it was published, it was mixed with Avicenna’s Risāla fi ʾilm al-ʾakhlaq. This disorder is most likely to be attributed to the misplacement of folia in the manuscript used for the earliest publication (Tīsʾ rasāʾil fi ʾl-ʾhikma waʾl-ṭabāʾiyyāt wa-fi ṣāḥīḥat ḥīṣab ʿAlīmān wa-ʾAbsāl, Constantinople, 1298/1881).62 None-
iv. The Recension Created for the Avicenna–Abū Saʿīd Correspondence: The Waṣīya

As with a number of Avicenna’s private letters, the ʿAḥd was taken over by the inventor(s) of the Avicenna–Abū Saʿīd b. Abī ʿl-Khayr Correspondence. Michot points out (80*) that the so-called Waṣīya addressed to Abū Saʿīd is actually a concatenation of the ʿAḥd and the Ḥusūl ʿilm wa-ḥikma. Passages from the Ḥusūl make up the first part of this Waṣīya, and passages from the ʿAḥd the second half. To complicate matters, the Ḥusūl, which appears to have been written to Avicenna’s student Ibn Zayla also formed on its own a part of the Avicenna–Abū Saʿīd b. Abī ʿl-Khayr Correspondence in a variety of recensions and with a fabricated ‘introduction (see above). It is almost certain that the recension of the Ḥusūl that was combined with the ʿAḥd to create the so-called Waṣīya was its second recension, in the manuscript, not the printed, version.65 Which version of the ʿAḥd was used for this concatenation is difficult to determine, but it certainly was not the original recension, since the text of the Waṣīya does not exhibit the dual in grammar and syntax. Table 2 provides a collation of pages and lines of the ʿAḥd from Badawi’s 1947 edition (in Aristu4 ‘inda ʿl-ʿarab), the Ḥusūl from the introduction to al-Makawi and Ṣabri al-Kurdi’s Cairo 1331 edition of the Najāt, and the Waṣīya from the introduction to al-Manṭiq al-mashriqīyīn.

Table 2

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<th>Table 2</th>
<th>Collation of ʿAḥd, Ḥusūl, and Waṣīya</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ḥusūl</td>
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<tr>
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<td>247.2–17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ḥusūl</td>
<td>14.3–15.4</td>
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<td>ʿAḥd</td>
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<td>ʿAḥd</td>
<td>249.5</td>
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For some reason Hasan ʿĀṣī chose to revisit the earlier collection Tīṣrāʾ rasāʾil, first published in Constantinople in 1881, to compare the texts therein to more recent and, in some cases, better editions,66 along with one late manuscript (Nuruosmaniye 4894), and to republish the whole with his unidentified editorial choices. Perhaps the most generous word to be said for this dubious venture is that ʿĀṣī disentangled the ʿAḥd from Risāla fi ʿilm al-akhlaq (see the Interrupted Version of the Truncated Recension above). For his revision of the ʿAḥd, he apparently consulted Badawi’s 1947 edition of the original recension and Nuruosmaniye 4894 in addition to the text as found in the 1881 publication of Tīṣrāʾ rasāʾil. The result is a contaminated witness that combines both the original and the truncated recensions. ʿĀṣī chose to retain the grammar and syntax of the truncated recension but added the text it omits by drawing on Badawi’s text, which he reformulated in the singular to be consistent with the truncated recension. The result should be avoided.

65 The distinction is important since the Waṣīya, to my knowledge, is found only in the publication Manṭiq al-mashriqīyīn; it is not clear whether there is a manuscript tradition behind it.

66 This is the case for M. Marmura’s edition of Ithbāt al-nubuwwat (Beirut: Dār al-Nahār, 1968) and A.-M. Goichon’s edition of al-Ḥudūd (Livre des définitions [Cairo: L’Institut français d’Archéologie Orientale du Caire, 1963]), both of which ʿĀṣī butchers.