

annoying for some, but sociologists will remember that Max Weber was quite similar in his approach. Many of the following texts are discussions or debates under the form of written dialogues (almost like transcripts of interviews) between Durkheim and some thinkers of his time (see Chapters 5, 6, 10, 12). The second half is more centered on education and might be less rewarding for scholars in religious studies (with the exception of Chapters 9 and 10).

Despite the author's prominent position within the history of sociology, one has to admit this *Durkheim: Essays on Morals and Education* has to be considered as a minor work if compared to his other classic writings. In other words, these selected writings are not the works for which Durkheim became famous. Instead of picking this collection of polemical essays, newcomers and readers unfamiliar with Durkheim should rather select his earlier books on a variety of topics such as methodology (Durkheim, 1895), work (Durkheim, 1893), suicide (Durkheim, 1897), and religion (Durkheim, 1912). However, sociologists and completists in the history of sociology will find here many obscure texts which are not without merit.

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Early Arabic Christian Contributions to Trinitarian Theology: The Development of the Doctrine of the Trinity in an Islamic Milieu, Thomas W. Ricks, Fortress Press, 2013 (ISBN 978-0-8006-9998-7), 184 pp., pb \$49

The historical comparative study of texts and traditions between Christianity and Islam in late antiquity is still in its infancy as an academic discipline and area of scholarly research. As such, it is refreshing to see a book like Ricks' *Early Arabic Christian Contributions to Trinitarian Theology*, concerned as it is with a rather narrow topic, come from a publishing house like Fortress, which does not typically publish such narrowly focused works, particularly in the field of history. This is certainly an advantage of the new series in which this volume is published – *Emerging Scholars* – it allows new areas of research to be explored and for these topics to benefit from the broad reach of large publishers. Thus, Fortress should be commended for both the present volume and the broader commitment to publishing new research in narrow fields of scholarly inquiry.

The central focus of this monograph, as the title suggests, is the influence of the early Islamic intellectual milieu on the development of Trinitarian doctrine. More specifically, Ricks analyzes some of the earliest extant theological literature written in Arabic by Christians, and provides detailed comparative analysis of these works with contemporary Arabic sources in order to demonstrate the ways that Christian theology – and specifically the doctrine of the Trinity – was influenced by Islamic thought and transmitted in Arabic.

The book is comprised of an introduction, four main chapters, and a conclusion. The four chapters each take up a particular text or author from the early Arabic Christian period. The introduction provides a broad overview of the political and social world of the early Arabic Empire and the various cultural forces at play. Scholars who work in this time period and field will not find new information here, but the novice will find a helpful introduction to Christian-Islamic cultural exchange in the earliest period of Islam.

The first chapter is concerned with one of the earliest Christian theological works in Arabic, an anonymous text called *Fī taṭlīṭ ʿĀllah āl-wāḥid*. As the author notes, is difficult to translate this title literally, but it could be rendered ‘On the Triniticity of the One God’ (p. 13). Throughout this chapter, the author notes the strong influence of Qur’ānic language and imagery on the trinitarian theology presented in *Fī taṭlīṭ*. For example, the most common trinitarian formula in *Fī taṭlīṭ* is ‘God and His Word and His Spirit’, which is language drawn directly from the Qur’ān. Thus, the argument of this chapter is a comparison of the use of ‘the Word’ and ‘the Spirit’ in *Fī taṭlīṭ* and in the Qur’ān. As Ricks notes, this strategy is a brilliant maneuver by the author of *Fī taṭlīṭ* because its Muslim readers would be forced to take seriously the Qur’ānic language for God, even though it was re-packaged in Christian terms (p. 53).

The next three chapters are each concerned with a particular author: Theodore Abū Qurrah (Chapter 2), Ḥabīb ibn Hidmah Abū Rā’iṭah (Chapter 3), and ‘Ammār al-Baṣrī (Chapter 4). In Ricks’ analysis, each author makes important contributions to the development of the Arabic expression of Trinitarian theology. Abū Qurrah, for example, moves beyond the ‘scriptural’ approach of *Fī taṭlīṭ* and adds philosophical sophistication to ideas about the Trinity, specifically with regard to divine attributes and terminology of ‘begetting’. Likewise, Abū Rā’iṭah, who was thoroughly conversant with contemporary Muslim theology and grammar, including the incorporation of Aristotelian logic, was able to employ the Islamic theological arguments of his milieu in support of his own philosophical apologetics for the Trinity. In so doing, Abū Rā’iṭah brought the trinitarian discourse of the eighth–ninth century to a level of philosophical sophistication that the West would not reach until the early scholastic period. And finally, al-Baṣrī

represents for Ricks the culmination and 'crescendo' (p. 169) of Christian Arabic theological argumentation about the Trinity, whose mode of philosophical apologetic would come to represent the standard for Arabic speaking Christian discourse.

The major strength of this volume is the author's grasp of both the philosophical concepts being discussed and the Arabic texts and traditions employing those concepts. The heart of this book is a close reading of several understudied and underappreciated texts and authors, combined with a careful analysis of these texts and authors within their social and intellectual milieus. It has long been known that Syriac and Arabic speaking Christians participated in the intellectual climate that brought Aristotle into the Arabic world, but Ricks' argument takes this observation several steps further, noting the ways that Christians and Muslims used and refined their Aristotelian arguments and techniques in conversation with each other. Ricks' work makes it abundantly clear that it is impossible to understand the Arabic Christian developments of trinitarian doctrine apart from the Muslim intellectual context. Likewise, however, Ricks also demonstrates the way that the development of Islamic theology through the absorption of Aristotelian logic is equally dependent upon Christian interlocutors.

This book is a valuable addition to two narrow fields that need much more scholarly attention: primarily, Arabic speaking Christianity in general, but also Christian and Muslim intellectual developments in late antiquity and the early medieval period. But on an even larger scale, this book should be of interest to anyone who studies the history of doctrine, the use of philosophy in theology, and historical arguments about the Trinity. The names and texts considered in this book deserve to be studied alongside Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas. Following the publication of this book, any study of the development of trinitarian doctrine that neglects the Arabic Christian tradition is woefully inadequate.

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Isaac on Jewish and Christian Altars: Polemic and Exegesis in Rashi and the Glossa Ordinaria, Devorah Schoenfeld, Fordham University Press, 2013 (ISBN 978-0-8232-4349-5), x + 229 pp., hb \$55

The two most widely read commentaries on the Bible in the Jewish and Christian Middle Ages were Rashi and the *Glossa Ordinaria*. Both were