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Instructions for Authors
Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE

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Instructions for Authors *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Third Edition

I. General guidelines

The Third Edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* differs in important ways from the Second Edition and from other encyclopaedias and journals for which you may have written. Please take a moment to familiarise yourself with this overview of the Third Edition and the sample articles. ***EI3* is published online and in print, and if you have access to these, we urge you to consult them.**

A. Readership. *EI3* is aimed at not only the specialists in all areas of Islamic studies who have been our traditional readership but also seeks to address the burgeoning demand for authoritative information on Islam that extends across disciplines and well beyond academia. One concrete way in which that broadened readership is addressed is in the proportionately greater space devoted to subject entries, as opposed to the proper-name entries (biographical and geographical) that dominated previous editions. These subject entries will generally be presented with English headwords, so that a reader will not need to know the Arabic word for Astrology, for instance, in order to find that article.

We ask that contributors keep this broader readership in mind when composing entries. **While entries should exhibit scholarly rigour, they should also be comprehensible to readers who may not have extensive knowledge of Islam and may have little or no background in the relevant languages.** Accordingly, please provide glosses (literal translations) where necessary and provide dates of death and, as appropriate, brief identifying phrases for figures mentioned within an article. Please provide brief explanatory phrases to define field-specific concepts as necessary.

Please also keep in mind that you are asked to write an encyclopaedia entry, not a journal article. Scholarly consensus should be presented clearly, and disputed questions laid out dispassionately. This is not the appropriate forum for attacking the work of other scholars. Also please try to avoid references that will quickly date your article, such as “recent scholarship has shown...”, and instead aim for less time-dependent phrasing, such as “scholarship has shown....”

B. Submission. Articles should be submitted to the *EI3* Project Coordinator, Abdurraouf Oueslati, at oueslati@brill.com, as a Microsoft Word document (with the extension “.doc” or “.docx”). All submissions are reviewed by at least two expert readers and revisions may be requested. Contributors will be notified when the article is accepted. When the article has been copy edited and reviewed again, it will be sent back to the author for final proofing. The final proof may contain queries, and we ask that contributors respond to any queries and confirm approval as quickly as possible.

Contributors will also be asked to sign and submit a transfer of copyright form, which will be provided by the Project Coordinator.



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As we will be corresponding with you on your article, it is essential that we be informed of any changes in your contact information. **Please inform us promptly of any changes in your email address.**

Please keep in mind that articles are not necessarily published in the order in which they are submitted. Within each print issue, or Part, we strive for balance and representation of a variety of subject areas. Accordingly, articles are carefully selected for each Part with the overall contents in mind. We ask for your patience.

C. Article summary. Each entry should be accompanied by a substantive, stand-alone summary of no more than 100 words. Article summaries appear online in an abbreviated version of EI3, which is available to non-subscribers to EI3, and are intended to give a sense of the article and encourage the reader to seek out the full article. This summary is different from a journal abstract in that it summarises the substance of the article, and thus will not include phrases such as “This article covers...”

Please note that the summary will not appear with the article. Accordingly, the first sentence or two of your article may repeat wording in the summary.

Please begin both the summary and the article itself with a topic sentence that identifies the subject in the first few words.

Please note that when a reader searches *EI3* online for an article, the possible matches are listed, giving just the first few words of the article. **Those first few words should give the reader a clear idea of the subject of the article.** For biographical articles, please provide identifying dates immediately following the person’s name, either Hijri/C.E. or, for modern figures, C.E. See Section II.D. below for details.

Following are examples of topic sentences:

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal Abū ‘Abdallāh al-Shaybānī al-Marwazī (164–241/780–855), also known as Imām Aḥmad or simply as Aḥmad, is the eponym of the Ḥanbalī school (*madhhab*) of law and theology and the most significant exponent of the traditionalist approach in Sunnī Islam.

Fountains in Islamic art and architecture exhibit considerable variation, both in terms of the etymologies of the various words for “fountain” and the physical forms, facts that may reflect the structure’s multiple linguistic and architectural sources.

Freemasonry (Ar. *māsūniyya*, Tk. *masonluk*, *farmasonluk*, Pers. *frāmāsūnrī*), also known as masonry, is a worldwide initiatic society that became established in much of the Muslim world during the nineteenth century but is found today only in such relatively liberal countries as Turkey, Lebanon, and Morocco.

Ahl-i Ḥadīth, “People of the Prophetic Traditions,” are members of an Islamic reformist movement that emerged on the Indian subcontinent in the late nineteenth century, distinguished from other Muslim movements in India and Pakistan by its positions on Islamic law (*fiqh*), theology, and ritual.

D. Key words. Please provide a list of keywords that will allow a reader searching for related topics to easily locate your article. Spelling variants for terms that appear in the article or other relevant terms that may not appear in the article at all can be useful.

E. Transliteration. Please note that the conventions adopted for *EI3* differ from those of *EI2*. For Arabic, instead of *ḍj*, we use simply *j*; instead of *ḵ*, we use *q*. Please see the transliteration tables in the Appendix for more specifics.

While we strongly prefer that articles be submitted using the Arial Unicode font or the Mac alternative, Lucida Grande, if that is not possible, an alternative coding is acceptable, so long as it is consistent. If an alternative coding is used, please submit in a standard font (Times New Roman, for example) with diacritics provided in simple alternative coding: *ā*=*a*/-, *ḥ*=*h*/., etc. Please do not use exotic fonts, as they may result in diacritics that are unreadable on our system. **Submissions in fonts that we cannot read will be returned to the author for reformatting.**

F. Cross-references. Please do not include “q.v.” within your article to signal a cross-reference, as these will be taken care of with hyperlinks. Instead, we ask that you provide, in the case of a person, the date of death or other identifying information, or for other names, a brief identifying phrase as appropriate, e.g., “the caliph Mu‘āwiya (r. 41-60/661-80)”.

G. Word counts. Please observe the word count assigned for your article. If you feel that you cannot cover the topic within that limit and you must exceed it by more than 20%, please consult with your Section Editor. Careful consideration has gone into assigning these limits, taking into account the contents of the entire *EI3*, and your cooperation is much appreciated.

H. Illustrations. Black-and-white illustrations, maps, tables, and charts are a very welcome enhancement and are in some cases essential. Authors should consult with the Section Editor before including such materials. If illustrations are to be included, please provide identifying captions and also note in the text approximately where such illustrations should be placed. Digital images should be at least 300 dpi for b/w images and should be suitable for direct reproduction. All illustrations should be provided without cost and free of copyright and permission fees. Original illustrations will be returned only if requested, but authors are strongly advised to send in duplicates or scans to avoid loss.

II. *EI3* Style

A. Qur’an citations. All citations of verses from the Qur’an should follow the “standard” Egyptian edition and appear in the form “Q 3:23” (or “3:23” when Q has already appeared in the sentence). The Q is written without italics and without a period.



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B. Ḥadīth citations. These should be given as book and *bāb*, not page number or number of the *ḥadīth*, as these can vary. Please also provide, in the bibliography, the publication details of the edition you use.

C. Spelling. Contributions should be submitted in English (with occasional exceptions to be dealt with on an ad hoc basis) with British spelling, using the *Oxford English dictionary* as authority. Please note that we are using the -is- termination rather than -iz- (organisation, civilisation, etc.), and other British spellings, such as defence (n.), practise (v.), etc.

For Arabic words, titles, and names, please retain the “al-”: al-Ṭabarī, etc.

D. Dates. For pre-modern figures and events (up to about the 19th century), please use the format Hijri/Common, e.g., 786/1384-5 and 786-96/1384-93. Both Hijri and C.E. dates should be given for most pre-modern figures (an exception would be a mediaeval European figure or event, which would probably require only C.E. dates). Please also provide regnal dates as needed, which would be formatted as, for example, “(r. 170-93/786-809).” For rulers, regnal dates are preferable to dates of death. For most modern figures or events—other than those associated with the Ottoman Empire—C.E. dates are sufficient: Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī (d. 436/1044), but ‘Abbās Ḥilmī II (1874-1944). For articles on the Ottoman Empire, please provide hicri/miladi dates for persons and events up to the dissolution of the empire.

For pre-Islamic dates, C.E. or B.C.E. should be used (with no spaces between letters). O.S. and N.S. should be used to indicate Old Style or New Style when there is likely to be confusion between the Julian and the Gregorian calendars. For the 19th and 20th centuries, omission of Hijri dates is acceptable, depending upon the context.

Arabic names of the months are always spelt in full, in accordance with the table below.

Muḥarram	Rajab
Ṣafar	Sha‘bān
Rabī‘ I	Ramaḍān
Rabī‘ II	Shawwāl
Jumādā I	Dhū l-Qa‘da
Jumādā II	Dhū l-Ḥijja

E. Numbers. Numbers from one to twelve not belonging to a series of figures should be spelt out, and later numbers may be spelt out or written as numerals, depending on context. In dates and page references, the smallest possible number of figures should be used, e.g., 223-4 (not 223-224), 1960-1 (not 1960-61), but 1396-1402.

F. Weights and measures. All measures (length, area, volume, capacity, weight) should be given in metric units, with the word “metre” or “kilometre” written out, not abbreviated. Temperatures should be given in Celsius.



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G. Bibliography

1. General guidelines:

Organisation of article bibliographies will, to some extent, be dictated by the article itself, with alphabetical order by author's last name being the most common format. For longer bibliographies, you may wish to list primary sources first, under the heading "Sources," followed by the secondary sources, under the heading "Studies." In some cases, it may make sense to include a section on editions or works by the subject of the entry.

Please note that authors' names for bibliographic entries should be given in full, to the extent that they are provided on the title page of the work, with no inversion of given name and family name. This format was adopted beginning with publication of Part 3 (last quarter of 2007). Parts 1 and 2 and articles already published online may not have been changed to conform to this new policy, so please keep this in mind when consulting those sources for examples of how to format particular items in a bibliography. The exception to this "full name" rule is that in the case of authors who publish using their initials rather than given names, the initials should be retained (M. J. de Goeje, for example).

Please be sure to provide editors' full names whenever possible.

Please note that for *EI3* we are not using the List of Frequently Cited Sources that was used for *EI2*. **Please provide complete information for all sources, including the full name of the editor and the city and year of publication.**

In general, bibliographies should not be longer than 20% of the length of the article itself. Bibliographies for longer articles may be divided into paragraphs and some annotation is acceptable, as necessary.

2. Format

a. Bibliographic entries. **Book titles** are italicised. Except in German (where standard German capitalisation is retained), only the first word of the title is capitalised, along with proper nouns (and in English, proper adjectives). Subtitles follow the title after a period (unless the title ends in a question mark or exclamation point). Any words italicised in the original book title are set in roman.

Please provide just the city and year of publication, as we do **not** include the name of the publisher. If a particular edition (other than the first) is cited, that should be noted with a superscript: 1943³ would indicate a third edition, published in 1943.

Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God's caliph. Religious authority in the first centuries of Islam*, Cambridge 1987.

Thomas Bauer, *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts. Eine*



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literatur- und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie des arabischen Ġazal (Wiesbaden 1998), 42-53.

In general, if a page citation is given, the city and year of publication are enclosed in parentheses, followed by a comma.

Items in the bibliography should be given in running text, separated by semicolons:

al-Āmidī, *al-Muwāzana bayn shi'r Abī Tammām wa-l-Buḥturī*, ed. al-Sayyid Aḥmad Ṣaqr, 2 vols., Cairo 1379/1960; al-Ḥuṣrī, *Zahr al-ādāb*, 2 vols., ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī, Cairo 1969-70; al-Marzubānī, *al-Muwashshaḥ fi ma'ākhidh al-'ulamā' 'alā l-shu'arā'*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn (Beirut 1995), 343-69; al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *al-Shihāb fi l-shayb wa-l-shabāb*, Istanbul 1302/1884-5; al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *Ṭayf al-khayāl*, ed. Ḥasan Kāmil al-Ṣayrafī and Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, Cairo 1381/1962.

Annotation, as necessary, within the bibliography is permissible, but contributors are asked to keep bibliographies as succinct as possible.

Please note that we are no longer using "Idem," as the hyperlinked *EI3* bibliographic search option requires full bibliographic data.

b. In-text citations. For citations within the text of the article, in cases where the full reference is given in the bibliography, please use the following format: "(Fulān, 314)", that is, author's last name and page number. If there is more than one work by the same author in the article bibliography, then please give the author's name, a shortened version of the title, and the page number: for an article, "(Fulān, Transformations, 314)"; for a book, "(Fulān, *Islamic thought*, 24-9)."

If the full reference is to be given in the text (in which case it would not be repeated in the bibliography), it should follow the format for full bibliographic references.

III. Transliteration tables

- A. Arabic
- B. Persian
- C. Ottoman Turkish and Modern Turkish
- D. Urdu, Hindi, and Punjabi

VI. List of abbreviations

V. Sample articles

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EI3 Transliteration
Arabic

Short vowels:	a; i; u	ق	q
ء	ʾ [Unicode 02BE]	ك	k
ا	ā	ل	l
ب	b	م	m
ت	t	ن	n
ث	th	ه	h
ج	j	ة	a; -at in <i>iḏāfa</i>
ح	ḥ	و	ū; -uww-; word final ū
خ	kh	ي \ ي	ī; -iyy-; word final ī
د	d		
ذ	dh		
ر	r		
ز	z		
س	s		
ش	sh		
ص	ṣ		
ض	ḍ		
ط	ṭ		
ظ	ẓ		
ع	ʿ [Unicode 02BF]		
غ	gh		
ف	f		

Please note:

- no word-initial hamzas: *al-amr*
- no sun letters
- elision of *al-*, according to rules of Classical Arabic: *wa-l-kitāb, fi l-masjid*, Muḥyī l-Dīn, *bi-l-kitāb*, but *lil-masjid*
- compound names with Allāh are in general written as one word: ‘Abdallāh, Hibatallāh
- Other compound names are written as two words: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān
- ibn and bint written as b. and bt.



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EI₃ Transliteration
Persian

ا	ʾ [Unicode 02BE]; ā	ف	f
ب	b	ق	q
پ	p	ك	k
ت	t	ل	l
ث	th	م	m
ج	j	ن	n
چ	ch	و	v; ū
ح	ḥ	ه	h
خ	kh	ة	-at
د	d	ي \ ی	ī; -iyyi
ذ	dh		
ر	r		
ز	z		
ژ	zh		
س	s		
ش	sh		
ص	ṣ		
ض	ḍ		
ط	ṭ		
ظ	ẓ		
ع	ʿ [Unicode 02BF]		
غ	gh		

Please note:

- Persian *iḍāfa* is written -i after consonants, -yi after vowels.

EI3 Transliteration Ottoman Turkish

For Ottoman we use modern Turkish spelling with Ottoman transliteration between brackets

Short vowels:	a; e; i; ı; o; ö; u; ü	Please do not transliterate the initial hamza.	
ا	ʾ [Unicode 02BE]; ā	ف	f
ب	b	ق	q
پ	p	ك	k; g [ğ]; ñ
ت	t	ل	l
ث	th	م	m
ج	c	ن	n
چ	ç	و	v; ū; w
ح	ḥ	ه	h; -e; -at
خ	kh	ة	-at
د	d	ي \ ی	ī; -iyye
ذ	dh	Please note:	
ر	r	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Ottoman and Turkic we use Modern Turkish spelling. For Ottoman the transliteration is added between brackets in accordance with this table as in the following example: <i>kaymakam</i> (<i>qā'im-maqām</i>). 	
ز	z		
ژ	zh		
س	s		
ش	ş		
ص	ş		
ض	ḍ		
ط	ṭ		
ظ	ẓ		
ع	ʿ [Unicode 02BF]		
غ	gh		

EI₃ Transliteration
Urdu, Hindi, and Punjabi

آ	a	ژ	zh
ا	a, i, u	س	s
او	ū-, o-, aw-	ش	sh
ای	ī-, e-, ay-	ص	ʃ
ب	b	ض	ḍ
بھ	<u>bh</u>	ط	ṭ
پ	p	ظ	ẓ
پھ	<u>ph</u>	ع	ʿ
ت	t	غ	gh
تھ	<u>th</u>	ف	f
ٹ	th	ق	q
ج	j	ک	k
جھ	<u>jh</u>	کھ	<u>kh</u>
چ	ch	گ	g
چھ	<u>chh</u>	گھ	<u>gh</u>
ح	ḥ	ل	l
خ	kh	لھ	<u>lh</u>
خو	kh ^w (in certain Persian words)	م	m
د	d	ن	n
دھ	<u>dh</u>	نھ	<u>nh</u>
ڈ	dʼ	نٹ	ṅ
ڈھ	<u>dʼh</u>	ں	ṁ (indicates the nasality of the preceding vowel)
ذ	dh	و	ū, o, aw, v, w
ر	r	ھ	h, a
ڑ	ɾ	ی	-ī, -y
ڑھ	<u>ɾh</u>	ے	-e, -ay
ز	z	ء	ʾ



IV. List of abbreviations

a. Periodicals

- AI* = *Annales Islamologiques*
AIUON = *Annali dell' Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli*
AKM = *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*
AMEL = *Arabic and Middle Eastern Literatures*
AO = *Acta Orientalia*
AO Hung. = *Acta Orientalia (Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae)*
ArO = *Archiv Orientální*
AS = *Asiatische Studien*
ASJ = *Arab Studies Journal*
ASP = *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*
ASQ = *Arab Studies Quarterly*
BASOR = *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BEA = *Bulletin des Études Arabes*
BEFEO = *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient*
BEO = *Bulletin d'Études Orientales de l'Institut Français de Damas*
BIE = *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte*
BIFAO = *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire*
BKI = *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*
BMGS = *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*
BO = *Bibliotheca Orientalis*
BrisMES = *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*
BSOAS = *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
BZ = *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
CAJ = *Central Asiatic Journal*
DOP = *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
EW = *East and West*
IBLA = *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes, Tunis*
IC = *Islamic Culture*
IJHAS = *International Journal of African Historical Studies*
IHQ = *Indian Historical Quarterly*
IJMES = *International Journal of Middle East Studies*
ILS = *Islamic Law and Society*
IOS = *Israel Oriental Studies*
IQ = *The Islamic Quarterly*
JA = *Journal Asiatique*
JAIS = *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*
JAL = *Journal of Arabic Literature*
JAOS = *Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JARCE = *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*
JAS = *Journal of Asian Studies*
JESHO = *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
JIS = *Journal of Islamic Studies*
JMBRAS = *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JNES = *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JOS = *Journal of Ottoman Studies*
JQR = *Jewish Quarterly Review*
JRAS = *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*



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JSAI = Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam
JSEAH = Journal of Southeast Asian History
JSS = Journal of Semitic Studies
MEA = Middle Eastern Affairs
MEJ = Middle East Journal
MEL = Middle Eastern Literatures
MES = Middle East Studies
MFOB = Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale de l'Université St. Joseph de Beyrouth
MIDEO = Mélanges de l'Institut Dominicain d'Études Orientales du Caire
MME = Manuscripts of the Middle East
MMIA = Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmi al-'Arabi, Damascus
MO = Le Monde Oriental
MOG = Mitteilungen zur Osmanischen Geschichte
MSR = Mamluk Studies Review
MW = The Muslim World
OC = Oriens Christianus
OLZ = Orientalistische Literaturzeitung
OM = Oriente Moderno
QSA = Quaderni di Studi Arabi
REI = Revue des Études Islamiques
REJ = Revue des Études Juives
REMMM = Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée
RHR = Revue de l'Histoire des Religions
RIMA = Revue de l'Institut des Manuscrits Arabes
RMM = Revue du Monde Musulman
RO = Rocznik Orientalistyczny
ROC = Revue de l'Orient Chrétien
RSO = Rivista degli Studi Orientali
SI = Studia Islamica (France)
SIk = Studia Islamika (Indonesia)
SIr = Studia Iranica
TBG = Tijdschrift van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen
VKI = Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land en Volkenkunde
WI = Die Welt des Islams
WO = Welt des Orients
WZKM = Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
ZAL = Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik
ZDMG = Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
ZGAIW = Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften
ZS = Zeitschrift für Semitistik

b. Other

ANRW = Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt
BGA = Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum
BNF = Bibliothèque nationale de France
CERMOC = Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur le Moyen-Orient Contemporain
CHAL = Cambridge History of Arabic Literature
CHE = Cambridge History of Egypt



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- CHIn* = *Cambridge History of India*
CHIr = *Cambridge History of Iran*
Dozy = R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, Leiden 1881 (repr. Leiden and Paris 1927)
EAL = *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Literature*
EI1 = *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st ed., Leiden 1913-38
EI2 = *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., Leiden 1954-2004
EI3 = *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three*, Leiden 2007-
EIr = *Encyclopaedia Iranica*
EJ1 = *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 1st ed., Jerusalem; [New York 1971-1992]
EQ = *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*
ERE = *Encyclopaedia of Religions and Ethics*
GAL = C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*, 2nd ed., Leiden 1943-49
GALS = C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur, Supplementbände I-III*, Leiden 1937-42
GAP = *Grundriss der Arabischen Philologie*, Wiesbaden 1982-
GAS = F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums*, Leiden 1967-
GMS = *Gibb Memorial Series*
GOW = F. Babinger, *Die Geschichtsschreiber der Osmanen und ihre Werke*, Leipzig 1927
HO = *Handbuch der Orientalistik*
IA = *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*
IFAO = Institut Français d'Archeologie Orientale
JE = *Jewish Encyclopaedia*
Lane = E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*
RCEA = *Répertoire Chronologique d'Épigraphie Arabe*
TAVO = *Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients*
TDVİA = *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*
UEAI = Union européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants
van Ess, *TG* = J. van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft*
WKAS = *Wörterbuch der Klassischen Arabischen Sprache*, Wiesbaden 1957-

V. Sample articles

Bishr al-Ḥāfi

Keywords:

ḥadīth

Ṣūfism

Summary:

Bishr b. al-Ḥārith, Abū Naṣr (d. 227/841 or 842), called **al-Ḥāfi**, was an ascetic famous for his rejection of worldly endeavours, among which he included the study of *ḥadīth*.

Article:

Bishr b. al-Ḥārith, Abū Naṣr (b. c.152/769, d. 227/841 or 842), called **al-Ḥāfi** (“the barefoot”), was an ascetic famous for his rejection of worldly endeavours, among which he included the study of *ḥadīth*. He was born in the vicinity of Merv, to an eminent Iranian family of early converts to Islam and supporters of the ‘Abbāsīd revolution. He was a *fatā*, that is, a member of a young men’s brotherhood or gang of bandits. At an unknown date he moved to Iraq, evidently to study *ḥadīth*. Among his teachers was ‘Abdallāh b. al-Mubārak (d. 181/797), a compiler of traditions on asceticism. He also associated with al-Fuḍayl b. Iyaḍ (d. 187/803), who taught that the *sunna* must be applied, not simply studied. At some point, he resolved to “devote himself to the worship of God” and “withdrew from people, transmitting no *ḥadīth*” (Ibn Sa’d, 7:342). He gained fame for his piety and asceticism and reportedly went to great lengths to avoid being recognised (Ibn Ḥanbal, *Kitāb al-wara’*, ed. Zaynab Ibrāhīm al-Qārūṭ, Beirut 1403/1983, 31). He died on 11 or 20 Rabī’ I 227/29 December 841 or 7 January 842, and crowds of admirers, among them the celebrated *ḥadīth* transmitter Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), marched in his funeral procession.

Though treated by some biographers simply as a student of *ḥadīth* (Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *al-Jarḥ wa-l-ta’dil*, Hyderabad 1371/1952, 1/1:356), Bishr became most famous for abandoning the study of *ḥadīth*. His reported reasons for doing so include an unwillingness to impugn the reliability of fellow Muslims, an aversion to gaining a reputation for learning and piety, and a wariness of scholars who transmitted the Prophet’s teachings without putting them into practice. Though some of the aphorisms attributed to him may have been fabricated by the *ḥadīth*-averse Aḥmad b. al-Ṣalt (d. 308/921), they are cited even by *ḥadīth*-minded biographers, such as the fifth/eleventh-century *ḥadīth*-scholar and biographer al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (7:71–83, = no. 3517). They may, therefore, reflect not only tensions between different juristic orientations but also differences between renunciant and *ḥadīth*-minded pietists, as well as disagreements among the *ḥadīth* scholars themselves.

In one aphorism, Bishr explains that he has made a habit of denying his soul anything it desires. He is said to have denied himself many pleasures besides *ḥadīth* transmission, including roast meat, fish, cucumbers, aubergine (eggplant), and beans. He shunned society and marriage and taught that the world and its inhabitants offer little beyond the temptation to sin. In various aphorisms, he suggests that resisting temptation prepares one to taste the sweetness of devotion. And if one wishes nothing from this world, one need not fear death. Rejecting the pursuit of worldly gain, he reportedly survived by making spindles; some reports indicate that his sister (or sisters) earned money by spinning. He is described as wearing rags and letting his hair and beard grow long. He is also said to have gone barefoot (Ibn Qutayba, *Ma’ārif*, ed. Tharwat ‘Ukāsha, Cairo 1960, 525), though one report (Abū Nu’aym, 8:340) refers in passing to his shoes, and the motif of barefootedness seems to have engaged the imagination of transmitters only in a later period. He is not described as advocating particular theological or political doctrines, though he is said to have praised the *ḥadīth*-scholar Ibn Ḥanbal, after whom the Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) is named, for his refusal to declare that the Qur’ān was created. Bishr is said to have had three sisters, Mukhkha, Muḍgha, and Zubda, the first of whom was renowned

for her scrupulosity (Ibn Abī Ya‘lā al-Farrā’, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī, Cairo 1371/1952, 1:427; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Ṣifat al-ṣafwa*, Hyderabad, 1355–7/1936–8, 2:294–6).

Though they list Bishr among the early exemplars of their way of life, early Ṣūfī authors usually attribute to him aphorisms of an ascetic rather than a mystical character. Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (d. 386/996), for example, has the Baghdad ascetic Ma‘rūf al-Karkhī (d. 200/815–6) say that Bishr would not eat food given him as a gift because he was constrained by scrupulosity, whereas he (Ma‘rūf) would accept such gifts because he had been freed by knowledge (al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb*, ed. and trans. Richard Gramlich, Stuttgart 1992–5, 2:177; Richard Gramlich, *Weltverzicht*, 249). Later Ṣūfī authors elaborate on various elements of his vita, especially his conversion and his barefootedness. Abū Nu‘aym (d. 430/1038), the jurist and Ṣūfī from Isfahan, reports in his *Ḥilyat al-awliyā’* (8:336–60) that Bishr impulsively rescued a discarded piece of writing with God’s name on it and was moved to abandon a life of crime. The great mystical Persian poet al-‘Aṭṭār (d. 617/1220) writes that Bishr was dragged out of a tavern by a saint and, unwilling to go back inside the tavern to retrieve his shoes, resolved to go barefoot for life (al-‘Aṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā’*, ed. Reynold A. Nicholson, London 1905, 1:107). Al-Hujwīrī (d. 465/1072), the author of the first Ṣūfī treatise in Persian, ascribes mystical motives to Bishr, claiming, for example, that he did not wish to walk shod on “God’s carpet” (meaning the ground, as in Qur’an 71:19; al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-mahjūb*, trans. Reynold A. Nicholson, repr. London 1936, 105).

Outside the Islamic tradition, Bishr appears in Gotthold Lessing’s play *Nathan der Weise* (1779) (a plea for religious toleration set in the medieval Near East), in the unlikely role of dervish, chess master, and treasurer to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (Saladin, r. 564–89/1169–93).

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Hermes and Hermetica

Keywords:

Hermes Trismegistus
Thoth
Hirmis
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Hermetica
Hermetism
Hermeticism
astrology
alchemy
Emerald Tablet
Idrīs
Enoch
Abū Maʿshar al-Balkhī

Summary:

The legendary **Hermes**, in Arabic Hirmis (occasionally Hirmīs), called al-Muthallath bi-l-Ḥikma (“Threefold-in-Wisdom”) was known among premodern Arabic scholars as an ancient sage and prophet and the author of numerous arcane works, many of which survive in Arabic manuscripts, but most of which remain unpublished.

Article:

The legendary **Hermes**, in Arabic Hirmis (occasionally Hirmīs), called al-Muthallath bi-l-Ḥikma (“Threefold-in-Wisdom”)—variations such as al-Muthallath bi-l-Niʿma (“Threefold-in-Grace”) are also found—was known among premodern Arabic scholars as an ancient sage and prophet and the author of numerous arcane works, many of which survive in Arabic manuscripts, but most of which remain unpublished.

Hermes Trismegistus (“Thrice Greatest”) was the name given to Thoth, the Egyptian god of scribal learning, by the authors of Greek discourses and treatises composed in Roman Egypt around the first and second centuries C.E. In the discourses, which are frequently in the form of dialogues, Hermes appears as a teacher who leads his disciples to a divine wisdom attained through pure contemplation; in the treatises, he presents techniques for divination and the manipulation of the occult forces inherent in nature (Fowden). Even long after the unknown Egyptian authors of these Greek works had disappeared, Christians and pagans of late antiquity continued to cite Hermes as an authoritative Egyptian witness in their polemical and theological arguments. Hermes’ treatises and dialogues were cited in or translated into various languages besides Greek, including Coptic, Armenian, Middle Persian, Latin, and Syriac.

Hermes Trismegistus is most famous today because of the celebrated reception of the Greek Hermetic dialogues in late fifteenth-century Italy and subsequently across Western Europe. European scholars considered these Greek Hermetica, in Latin translation (first printed 1471) and in Greek editions (from 1554), as representatives of a pristine, divine philosophy from the time of the biblical patriarchs. Authors of various tendencies, some of them critical of Aristotelianism, made use of the Hermetica, or at least the authority of Hermes, in different ways grouped together by modern scholars as “Hermetism” or “Hermeticism.” European disenchantment with the Hermetica set in gradually during and following the seventeenth century after philologists discovered that these Greek texts were not pristine, but were composed in Roman Egypt (Copenhaver, *Natural magic*; Ebeling, 59–141; Kühnmann; Yates).

In fact, mediaeval Latin translations of Arabic texts both referring to and ascribed to Hermes informed the

Renaissance European reception of the Greek Hermetica in ways so far only partly explicated (Burnett; Lucentini and Perrone Compagni). Numerous Hermetica had already been known in Arabic for centuries, in continuity with late antique traditions.

The first appearance of Hermes in Arabic coincides with the 'Abbāsid caliphs' promotion of the sciences. Iranian astrologers in the service of al-Manṣūr (r. 136–58/754–75) and his successors introduced Hermes into Arabic letters from astrological Hermetica available to them in Middle Persian. Some of their translations of Hermetica from Middle Persian into Arabic are extant, such as *Qaḍīb al-dhahab* (Schoeler, 175–7) and *Asrār al-nujūm fī l-kawākib al-bābāniyya* (Kunitzsch; this work had previously been translated into Middle Persian from Greek). A member of the second generation of these astrologers, Abū Sahl b. Nawbakht (fl. c. 158–93/775–809), composed a history of science in which Hermes was originally from Babylon but settled in Egypt and revealed his knowledge to the Egyptians. Hermes' astrology, while recognised as Egyptian in derivation, was thus considered to have its origins in the territory of the Persian Empire and to be a part of these astrologers' proper heritage (al-Nadīm, 299–301).

Soon thereafter anonymous authors produced new Arabic works presenting Hermes' teachings on topics other than astrology. Apparently earliest among these was a group of books in which Aristotle reveals talismanic secrets and magic rituals of Hermes to the conquering Alexander. These books (still unedited), which can be called collectively Talismanic Pseudo-Aristotelian Hermetica (TPAH), bear strange names apparently fabricated to seem Greek, such as *al-Iṣṭamākhīs*, *al-Ustuwwaṭās*, and *al-Hādītūs*. Destined to have a profound influence on the development of mediaeval learned magic, these texts were already available by the reign of al-Ma'mūn (r. 197–218/813–33), for they provided material at that time for the author of the *Kitāb sirr al-khalīqa*, in which Apollonius of Tyana reveals the teaching inscribed upon Hermes' Emerald Tablet (Weisser, 1979 and 1980; Rudolph). The brief and cryptic text of the Emerald Tablet, describing a heavenly ascent and earthly return, figurative or not, became authoritative for alchemists for centuries thereafter (Ruska).

In the 840s, al-Jāhīz (c. 160–255/776–868) alludes (26 §40) to a discussion of whether Hermes was the prophet Idrīs mentioned in the Qur'ān (19:56–7, 21:85–6). In the second/eighth century Idrīs had been identified by Muslim scholars with the biblical prophet Enoch, famous for receiving visions in heaven as described in the apocryphal *Books of Enoch*. The identification of Hermes with Idrīs-Enoch made Hermes, like Enoch, a recipient of heavenly visions, and it was thought that his knowledge of the astral sciences came to him during his heavenly ascent.

More Hermetica appeared in Arabic in the third/ninth century through translations from ancient Greek and other languages. A few examples: Hermes is cited as an authority in *malḥama*-compendia (books of omens and their meanings) that were based on material translated from Syriac (Ullmann, *Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften*, 290–1; Fahd, 224–6). Hermes' book of snake venoms and their antidotes has, at least partly, ancient Greek origins (Ullmann, *Schlangenbuch*). The *Kitāb Jiranīs*, a translation of the Hermetic Greek *Kyranīs*, is known today from manuscripts also containing the TPAH, although the text does not refer to Hermes in its Arabic form (Toral-Niehoff).

The Hermetica in circulation naturally created a demand for information about their author. The most influential Arabic account of Hermes' identity comes from the astrologer Abū Ma'shar al-Balkhī (171–272/787–886), who described three different figures named Hermes in the chronographic portion of his lost *Kitāb al-ulūf*. Abū Ma'shar assembled these accounts from older materials at his disposal. His first two Hermes derive from an unidentified Christian world chronicle dependent on the lost chronicle of the Alexandrian monk Annianus (fl. c. 405 C.E.). The first Hermes of these two, identified as Idrīs, is presented as an antediluvian prophet who inscribed his learning in Egyptian monuments; the second recovered it after the Deluge. The third Hermes of Abū Ma'shar was borrowed from a separate account by al-Kindī (d. c. 256/870), who, according to his statement preserved by al-Nadīm (d. 380/990) (385), knew a book of chapters (*maqālāt*) containing questions and answers between Hermes and his son on theology. The description of this book calls immediately to mind the famous

dialogues of the Greek Corpus Hermeticum. Unfortunately, the work that al-Kindī referred to appears to have been lost and has left little trace (van Bladel).

The prophetic character of Hermes was discussed by early Ismā'īlī missionaries, who esteemed the *Sirr al-khalīqa* highly and argued for the origin of all true knowledge in revelation, using Hermes as their example of a prophet of science. By the early fourth/tenth century, through their work and through Abū Ma'shar's *Ulūf*, Hermes was reputed among learned men generally as an ancient scholar-prophet. Around that time (c. 300/900) and thereafter, unknown authors of Ismā'īlī tendency began to produce a large number of alchemical pseudepigraphs in which Hermes often appears as an authority (for examples see Kraus). Some of these claim to be works of Hermes translated from inscriptions recovered in Egyptian ruins; a few such texts have been published (Vereno).

In a similar pseudepigraphic milieu, an unknown author adapted the story of Plato's *Phaedo* for the *Kitāb al-tuffāha* or *Liber de pomo*, in which Aristotle, on his deathbed, teaches about Hermes's revelation, among other things (Khayr Allāh, 107, 220). From this work, philosophers of the late fourth/tenth century such as al-ʿĀmirī (d. 381/992) and the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' became acquainted with Hermes as an ancient sage who ascended to heaven, listened to the angels, and returned to teach the secrets of nature.

In the fifth/eleventh century, two influential philosophical gnomologia, the *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma*, of uncertain authorship and known today only from derivative works, and the *Mukhtār al-ḥikam* of al-Mubashshir b. Fātik (written 440/1048–9), gave Hermes a special place among ancient philosophers. The *Ṣiwān* took its account of Hermes from Abū Ma'shar, but al-Mubashshir used a lost source, written in the fourth/tenth century, perhaps by a Ṣābian scholar in Baghdad, in which the prophetic character of Hermes is emphasised. These two works ensured that Hermes would hold a prominent position in subsequent histories of science written in Arabic and in later gnomologia. The numerous maxims ascribed to Hermes in these two sources were adapted by their learned compilers from pre-existing gnomologia, some of which were translations from Greek, Middle Persian, and Sanskrit. These two gnomologia definitively established Hermes' fame in Arabic among scholars generally, outside of the company of astrologers and alchemists.

The philosopher al-Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191) in particular gave Hermes an important place in his intellectual genealogy as a representative of a pristine philosophy antedating Aristotle. Later philosophers, such as Ibn Sab'īn (d. 668/1270), make similar references to Hermes as an esteemed antecedent. The historians of science of the seventh/thirteenth century, such as Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a (d. 668/1270) (1.16–8) and Ibn al-Qifṭī (d. 646/1248) (1–7, 346–50), synthesised the accounts of Abū Ma'shar's three Hermeses and al-Mubashshir's prophetic Hermes. From then on, Hermes' legend was relatively common knowledge among scholars (van Bladel).

The Persian philosopher Bābā Afḍal (al-Dīn) Kāshānī (d. early seventh/thirteenth century) is the first to attest, in his surviving correspondence, to the existence of the Arabic work of Hermes best known today, *Fi zajr al-naḥs*, a series of exhortations to the soul to turn from wordly things toward pure intelligibles (Bardenhewer; Badawī, intro. 48–54, text 51–116; Scott, 4:277–352, gives an English translation of Bardenhewer's Latin version). Kāshānī (331–85) translated the work into Persian, too. Hermes' fame also made its way from Arabic histories into Persian poetry: Nizāmī (d. early seventh/thirteenth cent.) and Jāmī (d. 898/1492) included Hermes in their romances of Alexander as one of the philosophers in the company of the legendary Macedonian.

Contrary to common opinion today, there is no known part of the Arabic Hermetica that clearly originated among Ṣābian pagans of Ḥarrān, besides perhaps al-Mubashshir's account; there is therefore no reason now to consider the Ḥarrānian Ṣābians to have been “Hermetists.” Al-though the Ḥarrānians famously regarded Hermes as their prophet (attested already c. 200/815 by Theodore Abū Qurra, 211–2)—just as they are reported to have esteemed other pagan sages—no extant work of Hermes in Arabic has hitherto been demonstrated certainly to come from Ḥarrānian pagans. Indeed, some Hermetica in Arabic antedate the third/ninth-century Ḥarrānian scholar Thābit b. Qurra (d. 288/901).

Historians of Arabic letters have also often uncritically assumed the existence of an Arabic or Islamic

Hermeticism as a school of thought or movement. This has relied either on the senses of the word imported from the modern analysis of the Hermetica in the rather different circumstances either of Roman antiquity or of Renaissance Europe or on the assumption of a consistent outlook by the authors of various Arabic Hermetica. There is, in fact, no evidence for a distinct Hermetic school of thought in Arabic or anything that can usefully be called Hermetism in the Arabic context. The characteristic shared by the dozens of premodern Arabic scholars who discussed Hermes or who dealt with Hermetica was not a putative Hermeticism but merely their common interest in the ancient past and particularly in the study of the works of the ancients in Arabic translation. This interest held across confessional and doctrinal boundaries. Astrologers, alchemists, makers of talismans, and philosophers all had professional reasons for having recourse to the works ascribed to Hermes. It is therefore misleading to speak of Arabic or Islamic Hermeticism. What we have, instead of a pervasive school of thought, are individual Arabic Hermetica, of diverse contents, produced in different times and places to address different concerns, in each case building on the lore about Hermes that their individual translators and authors already possessed. The Arabic Hermetica are unified only by the legend of their ancient author.

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