Dimitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition: Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works* (Second, Revised and Enlarged Edition, Including an Inventory of Avicenna's Authentic Works), Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2014. xxxi+615 pages. ISBN 978-900-4201-72-9.

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Dimitri Gutas, a living authority on Arabic/Islamic philosophy, finally republished a reviewed and extended version of his twenty six year old *magnum opus*, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition: Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works* (Leiden & New York& København & Köln: E. J. Brill, 1988, xii+342 pages). Although Gutas states in the preface of the second edition that this edition does not claim to be a new book as it follows the first edition in terms of scope, argument, tone and direction (p. xii), it does not seem to be an ordinary "second edition" for its correction of mistakes, inclusion of the accumulated literature within a quarter century primarily by Gutas himself and other researchers on Ibn Sīnā, the newly added conclusion and the detailed list of Ibn Sīnā's authentic books.

In the first chapter, Gutas examines the primary sources on Ibn Sīnā and the Aristotelian tradition. Gutas adds to his analysis especially his late student David C. Reisman's (d. 2011) arguments on Ibn Sīnā's life and works, particularly on *al-Mubāḥathāt* and Yahya Michot's important arguments on Ibn Sīnā's life and the chronology of his works. He presents a comprehensive and updated framework by examining the philosopher's three principal works for their content, time of composition and its relation to the Aristotelian tradition.

In the second chapter, which focuses on how Ibn Sīnā perceives the Aristotelian tradition, Gutas analyzes the philosopher's autobiography in detail and analyzes his perspective for the history of philosophy and his understanding of philosophy through concepts frequently used by Ibn Sīnā. Gutas indicates in the preface for the second edition, his use of the concept of *ḥadth* as "guessing correctly" rather than "intuition" as he used in the first edition. Gutas reminds us that the word "intuition" implies a mystic and extra-rational meaning unlike what was meant by Ibn Sīnā. Therefore, in order to avoid such a mistake, he translates *ḥadth* as "guessing correctly [the middle term]" (p. xiii).

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As the title of the book also indicates, Gutas aims at showing that Ibn Sīnā's philosophy, which has held a central and influential position in (even if it has been modified and criticized throughout) the history of Arabic/Islamic philosophy, is a representative of the Aristotelian/Peripatetic tradition rather than the "mystical" interpretation that has become common of our time. In the first edition of the book, although Gutas presented authoritatively Ibn Sīnā's connection with the Aristotelian tradition, he did not make a comprehensive discussion on the mystical interpretation of Ibn Sīnā's philosophy but rather he examined this subject in articles issued afterwards.[1] Even though we cannot say that the second edition includes all of Gutas' articles on this subject with detail, he guides the reader to these articles by citing them in appropriate places and outlines his perspective in the appendix titled "The Symbolic Method: Not Mystical Knowledge" (pp. 343-346) added to the eighth chapter of the third part where he examines Ibn Sīnā's integration into the Aristotelian tradition.

In addition to the aforementioned small correctives and complementary elements, we need to mention two important factors that make the second edition of *Avicenna* valuable. First of these is the absence of concluding chapter that readers of the first edition have frequently voiced. Gutas' long conclusion titled "Avicenna's Philosophical Project" (pp. 359-386) can be read as an outcome of his studies on Ibn Sīnā starting with *al-Ta'līqāt 'alā ḥawāshī Kitāb al-Nafs* approximately forty years ago.[2] Firstly, as a result of two-century long period after the Greek-Arabic translation movements when Ibn Sīnā was born, he inherited Aristotle's works as basis of "philosophy" and commentaries on these works starting with Nicolas of Damascus, Alexander of Aphrodisias and Themistius, extending to Alexandrian philosophers

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1   Although Gutas's criticism on Ibn Sīnā's mystic interpretation can be seen in many of his works, the following chronologically ordered articles issued after the publication of the first editon of *Avicenna* deserve to be mentioned: "Avicenna: Mysticism", *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater, c. III (Londra-New York 1989), pp. 79-83; "Ibn Tufayl on Ibn Sînâ's Eastern Philosophy", *Oriens*, 34 (1994), s. 222-241; "Avicenna's Eastern ("Oriental") Philosophy: Nature, Contents, Transmission", *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 10 (2000), pp. 159-180; "Intuition and Thinking: The Evolving Structure of Avicenna's Epistemology", *Aspects of Avicenna*, ed. Robert Wisnovsky (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2001), pp. 1-38; "Avicenna's Marginal Glosses on *De Anima* and the Grek Commentatorial Tradition", *Philosophy, Science and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic and Latin Commentaries*, ed. Peter Adamson, Han Baltussen, M. W. F. Stone (Londra: Institute of Classical Studies School of Advanced Study University of London, 2004), pp. 77-88; "Imagination and Transcendental Knowledge in Avicenna", *Arabic Theology, Arabic Philosophy: From the Many to the One: Essays in Celebration of Richard M. Frank*, ed. James E. Montgomery (Leuven-Paris-Dudley, MA 2006), pp. 337-354; "Intellect without Limits: The Absence of Mysticism in Avicenna", *Intellect and Imagination in Medieval Philosophy: Proceedings of the XI. International Congress of Medieval Philosophy, Porto 26-31/VIII/2002*, ed. Candida Pacheco, J. Francisco Meirinhos, c. I (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), pp. 351-372.

2   A relatively short verstion of this conclusion is published in Peter Adamson (ed.), *Interpreting Avicenna: Critical Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) pp. 28-47.

principally to Philoponus in the late antique period. Emphasizing this, Gutas states that Ibn Sīnā acquired this "corpus" through the famous classification (logic, theoretical and practical philosophy) applied to Aristotle's works, which had become the norm. He argues that from this acquired tradition philosophy meant "the rational and logically verifiable understanding of the universe and its operation". According to Gutas, one of the distinguishing marks of Ibn Sīnā in Aristotelianism of his time is his success in analysis of *all philosophical knowledge* compositely in a single volume rather than traditionally writing commentaries on Aristotle's works or writing independent treatises on various subjects. In this sense, Ibn Sīnā invented the genre of *summa philosophiae* to present philosophy as a whole, reflecting both the interrelatedness and interdependence of all knowledge, and its correspondence with reality (pp. 359-364).

According to Gutas, Ibn Sīnā who aims at presenting the philosophical tradition he acquired as a whole is aware of the inconsistencies and deficiencies of this tradition. For Ibn Sīnā who seems to have a strong consciousness on the history of philosophy, even though Aristotle, the architect of this system, is right on many issues, he does not seem to be completely right on every issue when one considers the accumulative nature of philosophy over the 1300 year long period since the time of Aristotle. For this reason, Ibn Sīnā criticizes those philosophers who are interested in explaining and defending what Aristotle says instead of exploring the truth through critical thinking and philosophical analysis. Thus, he aims to "update" philosophy as the second objective of his philosophical project (pp. 365-366).

Another factor that made Ibn Sīnā influential is, according to Gutas, his awareness of the historical and social context in which he lived as well as his awareness of the unity of philosophy and its history. He expanded the sphere of philosophy aiming at explaining the truth and incorporated it in his philosophical analysis of other phenomena such as religion and the connection between the human being and the transcendent. This aspect of Ibn Sīnā's philosophical project has been, on the one hand, openly criticized and clandestinely adopted, as seen in the example of al-Ghazālī, and on the other hand, has been misinterpreted to justify a particular perspective, as seen in the Shiite tradition. Gutas argues that the first approach created a philosophical theology in both Sunni and Shiite world. The second approach led to a misunderstanding as if Ibn Sīnā had two philosophies, one of them being Aristotelian and the other being mystical. This misunderstanding can be found in Western studies starting in the nineteenth century as a result of the spread of this misunderstanding in Iran because of pseudo Iranian origins of Ibn Sīnā (pp. 366-368).

Gutas states that Ibn Sīnā departed from an epistemology based on logic and theory of the soul in order to realize his philosophical project and argues that this

epistemology provided Ibn Sīnā the condition for presenting the system in a holistic way by considering both all theoretical knowledge on human being and the relative structure of the transcendent knowledge which was thought to belong to celestial intellects as well as various levels for the human intellect's acquisition of this knowledge. Discursive thinking resides on the basis of this explanation, which is the intellect reaching to the intelligibles through finding the middle terms by establishing syllogisms step by step based on internal and external sense. On its top resides the non-discursive thinking, which is quick comprehension of the object of knowledge with one intellection without any change in its syllogistic structure. Ibn Sīnā held that this non-discursive thinking belonged to prophets. According to Gutas, Ibn Sīnā's proposed epistemological connection between the human intellect and the celestial intellects set the ground for his adoption of a progressive perspective towards the history of philosophy. In this context, for Ibn Sīnā, every philosopher alters and completes the works of his predecessors through syllogistic reasoning and correctly guessing the middle term, therefore arriving at a level of knowledge closer to the intelligible world (pp. 369-373).

Gutas at this point argues that Ibn Sīnā develops an experimental theory of knowledge in order to explain the structure of human mind, which needs physical senses to perceive the intelligibles unlike the celestial intellects that know the intelligibles through their causes. Describing Ibn Sīnā's perspective as rationalist empiricism, Gutas states that the human experiment related to the perception of human existence and its very existence stands on the basis of this, and that these premises constitute the bases that Ibn Sīnā demonstrates the existence of human soul as an essence distinct from both God and the body. According to Gutas, contrary to the continuous and timeless relationship of the celestial intellects with intelligibles, in order to establish this connection the necessity of human intellect's ascending from capacity to action through the means of finding middle terms means that the "ittişāl" [contact] with the active intellect is not in an automatic top-down flow but, on the contrary, it depends on the human intellect's seeking for middle terms and other intelligibles including abstraction and exerting effort in this way (pp. 373-379).

Lastly, Gutas analyzes Ibn Sīnā's style of writing in detail and outlines the various styles he seeks including "philosophical encyclopedia" commentaries, symbolic texts, monographs, poetry and correspondence in order to express his new synthesis in philosophy to address the interests of his time and society. According to him, Ibn Sīnā started a new period in which he contacted not only his contemporaries but also later generations. His works replaced Aristotle and Galen as Greek philosophy coalesced with Islamic intellectual life and thus became a natural part of this world and also the philosophical activities in the Islamic world entered in a "golden" age (pp. 379-386).

Another aspect that makes the second edition of *Avicenna* valuable especially for Ibn Sīnā studies is the meticulous lists of authentic works of Ibn Sīnā (pp. 387-528). Gutas starts with an analysis and comparison of the four lists that have reached us. Then he lists the works that certainly belong to Ibn Sīnā under the categories of philosophical encyclopedia, logic and language, physics, mathematics, metaphysics, practical philosophy, private correspondence and medicine with their content, manuscript copies, critical editions and translations into Western languages –unless they are especially treated in the book. In addition to the authentic works, he lists the works that are attributed to Ibn Sīnā where their falseness is certainly proven alongside works whose authenticity is neither proved nor negated. This list, which excels and updates other Ibn Sīnā bibliographies prepared by Osman Ergin (1937, 1956), Georges C. Anawati (1950) and Yahyā Mahdawī (1954), includes many important findings for Ibn Sīnā studies. It is worth mentioning that Gutas finds the authenticity of the following books doubtful: *al-Qaṣīda al-ʿayniyya*, *Ḥaqāʾiq ʿilm al-tawḥīd (al-ʿArshiyya?)*, *Risāla fī ithbāt al-nubuwwa*, *Risāla fī al-ṣalāt*, *Risāla fī sirr al-qadar*, *Fī sabab ijābat al-duʿā wa kayfiyya al-ziyāra*, *Salāmān wa Absāl*, *Risāla fī al-siyāsat*, *Risāla fī al- ḥuzn wa esbābihī*.

The new edition of *Avicenna* has become more useful with the carefully prepared index of Ibn Sīnāʾs works in original titles and their English translations as well as the bibliography and the index of concepts that did not exist in the first edition. It is especially important for outlining the Western literature on Ibn Sīnā over a quarter century. Thanks to Gutasʾs mastery and diligence in his historical, philological and philosophical analysis of Ibn Sīnāʾs life, works and thoughts, the new edition of *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition* reasserts its methodological model for studying Arabic/Islamic philosophy and deserves to be called a "modern classic."